Your secret...?

AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

2

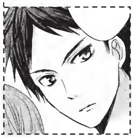
EMA TOYAMA

AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

Aoba-Kun's Confessions

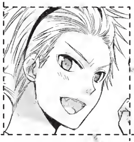
CHARACTERS

BASKETBALL TEAM MEMBERS



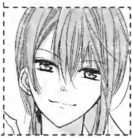
TAIKI IWASE

The Team Captain, who lives and breathes basketball. High School 2nd Year.



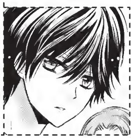
TSUYOSHI OKAMOTO

Often the butt of jokes. High School 2nd Year.



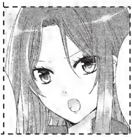
RYOSUKE KAZANUMA

The intellectual Vice-Captain. High School 2nd Year.



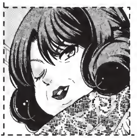
NAO INOHARA

Aoba's best friend. High School 1st Year.



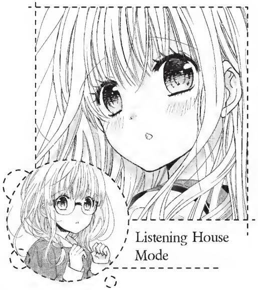
KYOKO MATSUMAE

Manager. High School 1st Year.



MARIA SAKURADA

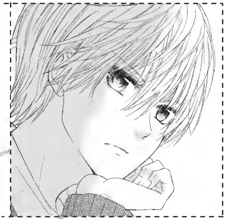
Mayo's aunt. She runs the "Listening House."



Listening House Mode

MAYO SAKURADA

A quiet girl who isn't good at talking to people. In order to conquer her weaknesses, she starts a part-time job at a Listening House as a person who listens to other people's worries.
She joined the basketball team as a manager in order to understand Aoba's worries.



KOTA AOBA

The basketball team's star player who's popular with the girls, he went to the same junior high school as Mayo.
He seems to be hiding a worry that he can't share with anyone.
He's Mayo's first customer at the Listening House.

STORY

Mayo angers Aoba after he finds out that she is the girl from the Listening House.
When Aoba says that he won't attend the game, Mayo lies to him and gets him to go to the venue of the match.
Seeing Aoba's face come alive as he plays basketball, Mayo's desire to "relieve Aoba-kun of his worries" grows stronger...

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5

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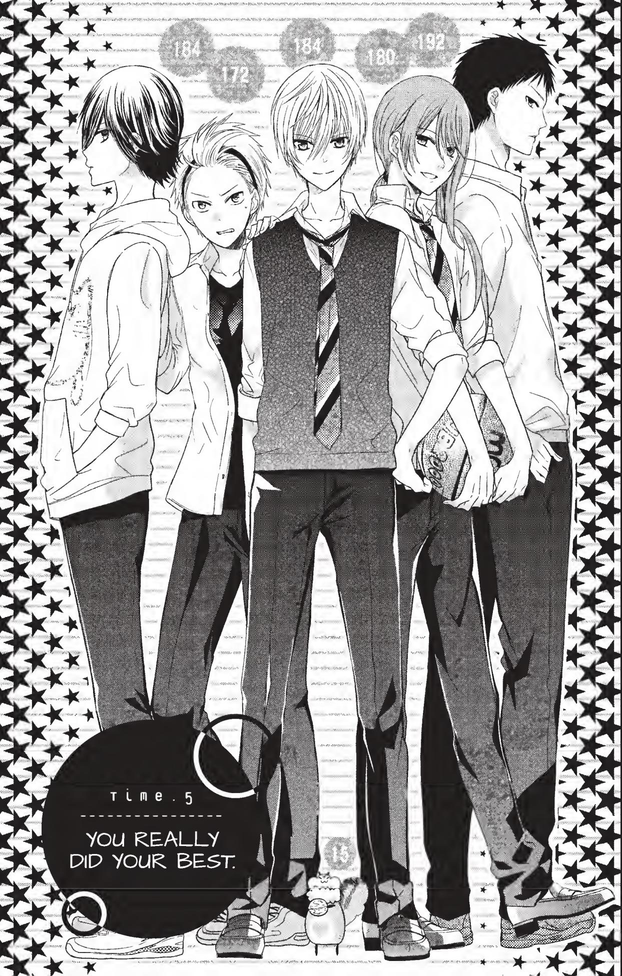
184
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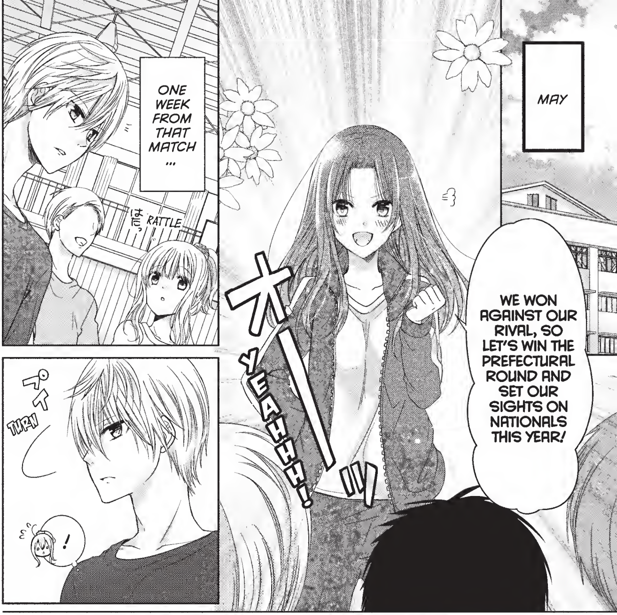
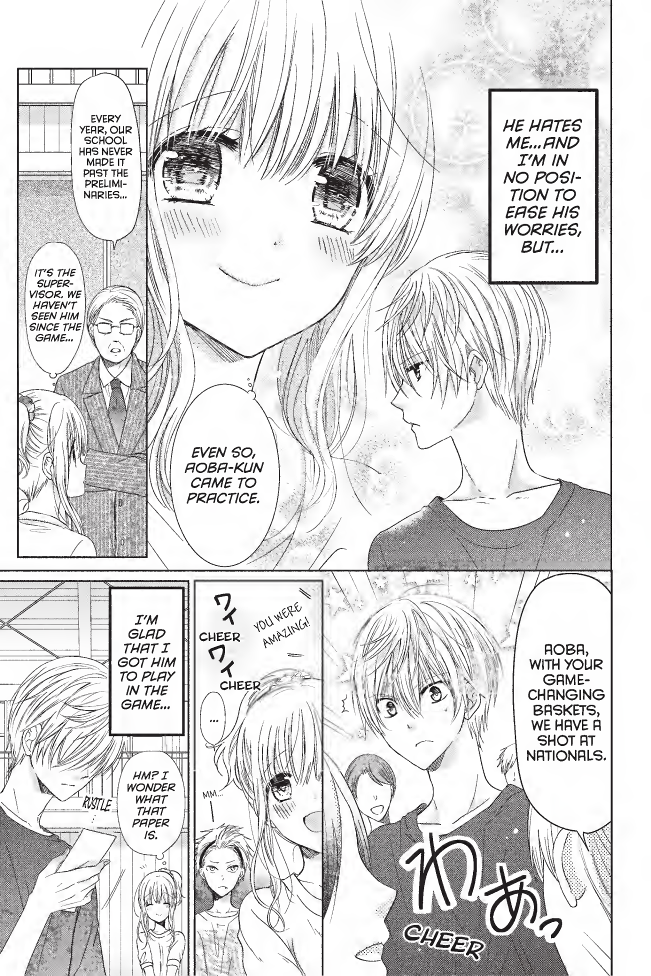
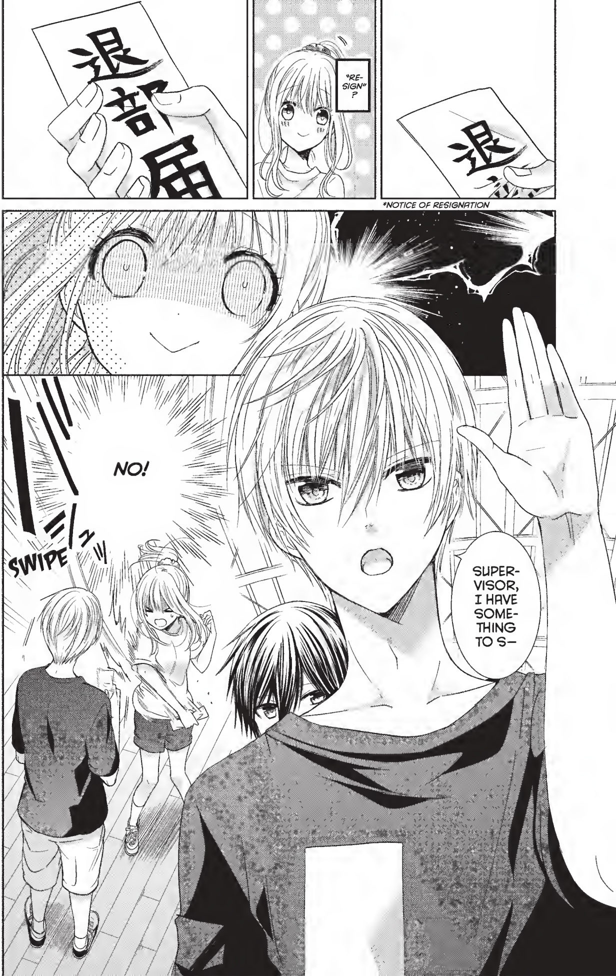
Time.5

YOU REALLY DID YOUR BEST.

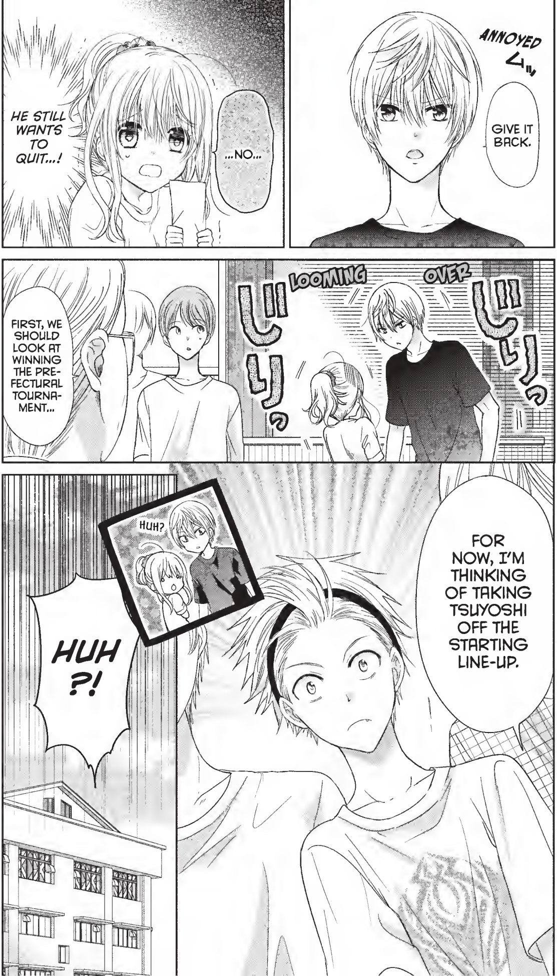

MAY
WE WON AGAINST OUR RIVAL, SO LET'S WIN THE PREFECTURAL ROUND AND SET OUR SIGHTS ON NATIONALS THIS YEAR!
オー
YEAHHH!
ONE WEEK FROM THAT MATCH...
はっ RATTLE
プイ TURN
!

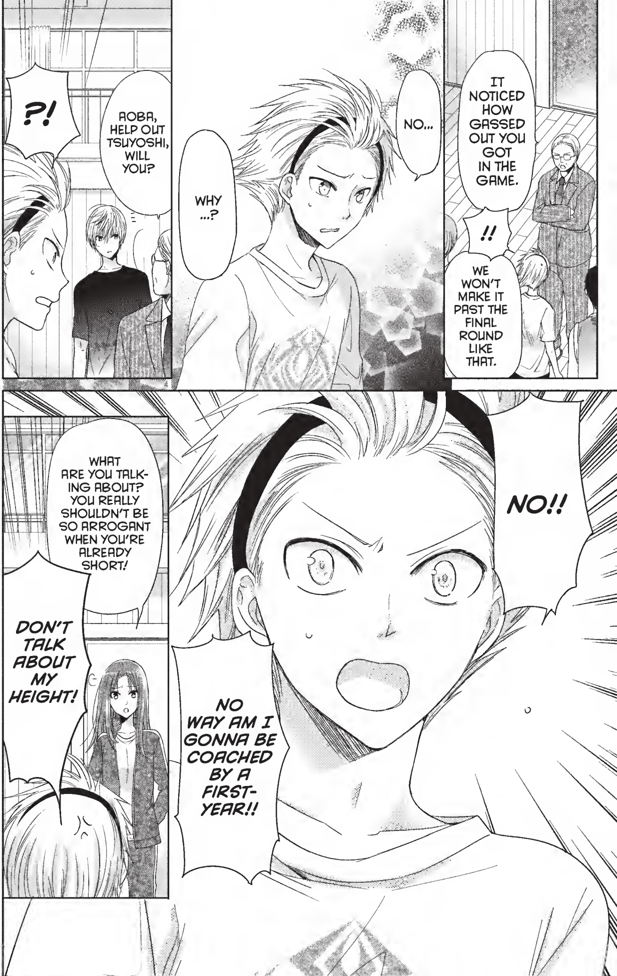
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS


HE HATES ME...AND I'M IN NO POSITION TO EASE HIS WORRIES, BUT...
EVEN SO, AOBA-KUN CAME TO PRACTICE.
EVERY YEAR, OUR SCHOOL HAS NEVER MADE IT PAST THE PRELIMINARIES...
IT'S THE SUPERVISOR. WE HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE THE GAME...
AOBA, WITH YOUR GAME-CHANGING BASKETS, WE HAVE A SHOT AT NATIONALS.
わあっ
CHEER
YOU WERE AMAZING!
ワイ
CHEER
ワイ
CHEER
...
MM...
I'M GLAD THAT I GOT HIM TO PLAY IN THE GAME...
HM? I WONDER WHAT THAT PAPER IS.
RUSTLE

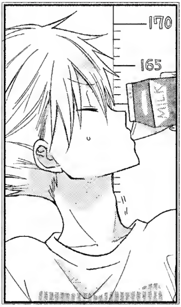

退部届
"RE-SIGN"?
退
SUPERVISOR, I HAVE SOMETHING TO S—
NO!
SWIPE

*NOTICE OF RESIGNATION


ANNOYED
ムッ
GIVE IT BACK.
...NO...
HE STILL WANTS TO QUIT...!
LOOMING OVER
じりっ
じりっ
FIRST, WE SHOULD LOOK AT WINNING THE PREFECTURAL TOURNAMENT...
FOR NOW, I'M THINKING OF TAKING TSUYOSHI OFF THE STARTING LINE-UP.
HUH?
HUH?!

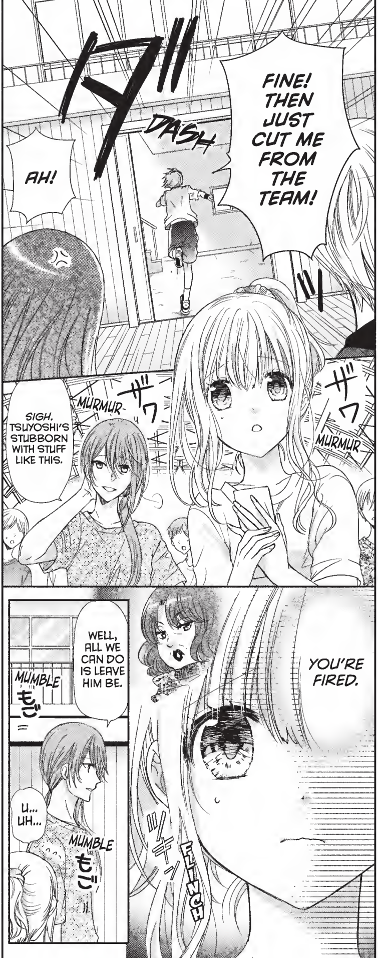

IT NOTICED HOW GASSED OUT YOU GOT IN THE GAME.
!!
WE WON'T MAKE IT PAST THE FINAL ROUND LIKE THAT.
NO...
WHY ...?
AOBA, HELP OUT TSUYOSHI, WILL YOU?
?!
NO!!
NO WAY AM I GONNA BE COACHED BY A FIRST-YEAR!!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T BE SO ARROGANT WHEN YOU'RE ALREADY SHORT!
DON'T TALK ABOUT MY HEIGHT!

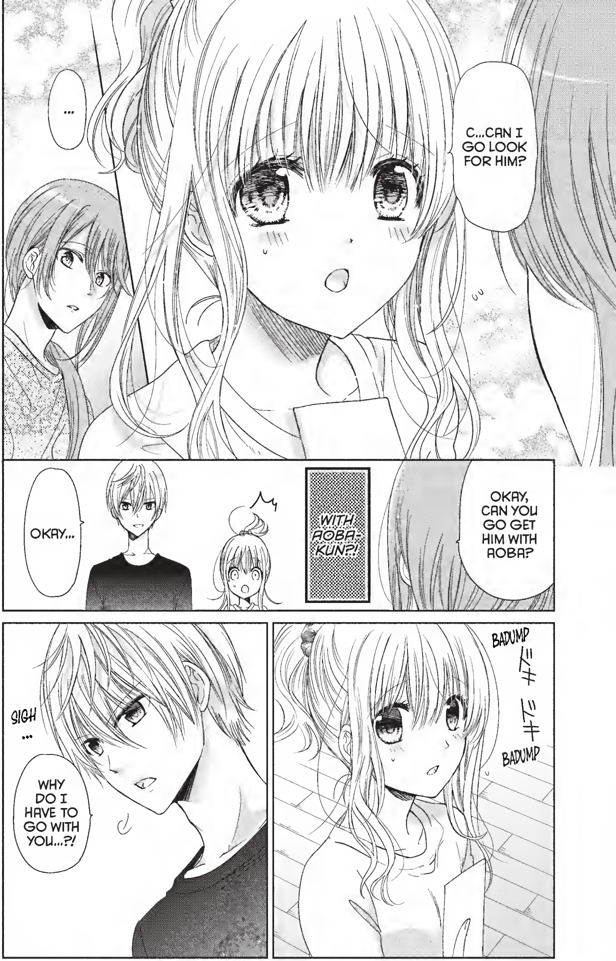
TSUYOSHI
OKAMOTO
BORN
FEBRUARY 14TH
BLOOD TYPE: B
HEIGHT: 172CM
FAVORITE FOOD:
SPICY RAMEN
OKONOMIYAKI

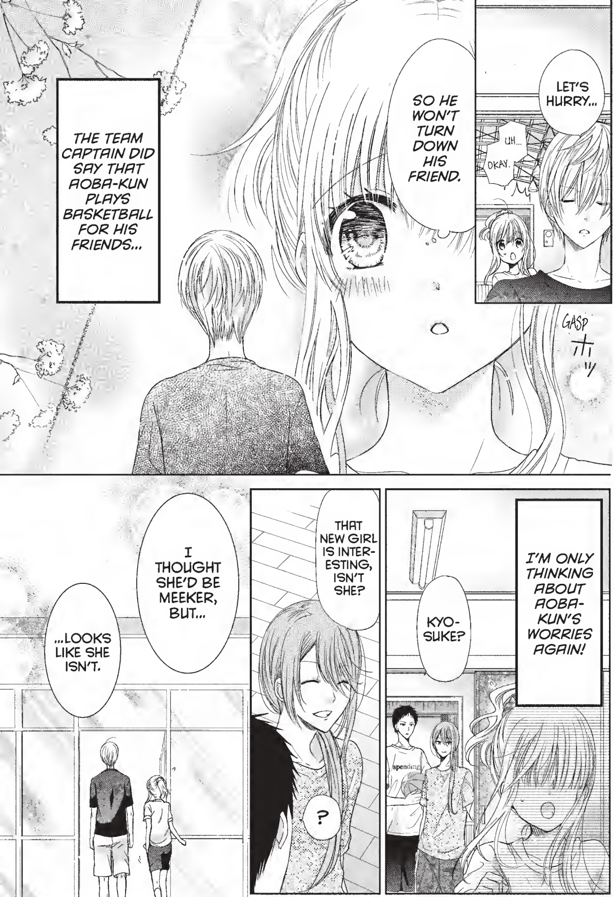

170
165
MILK

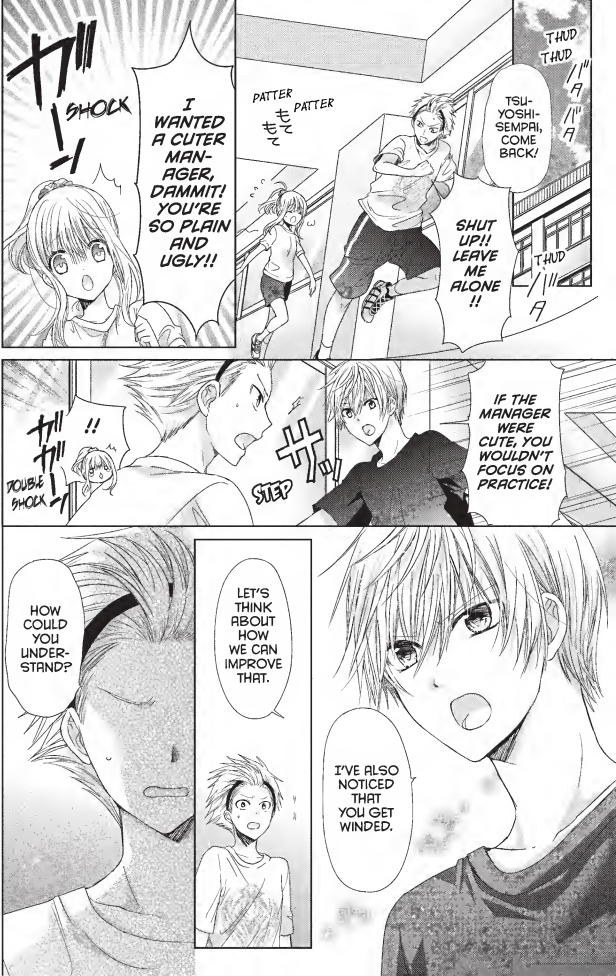
6:30AM
HIS MORNING RITUAL:
CHUG A LITRE OF MILK

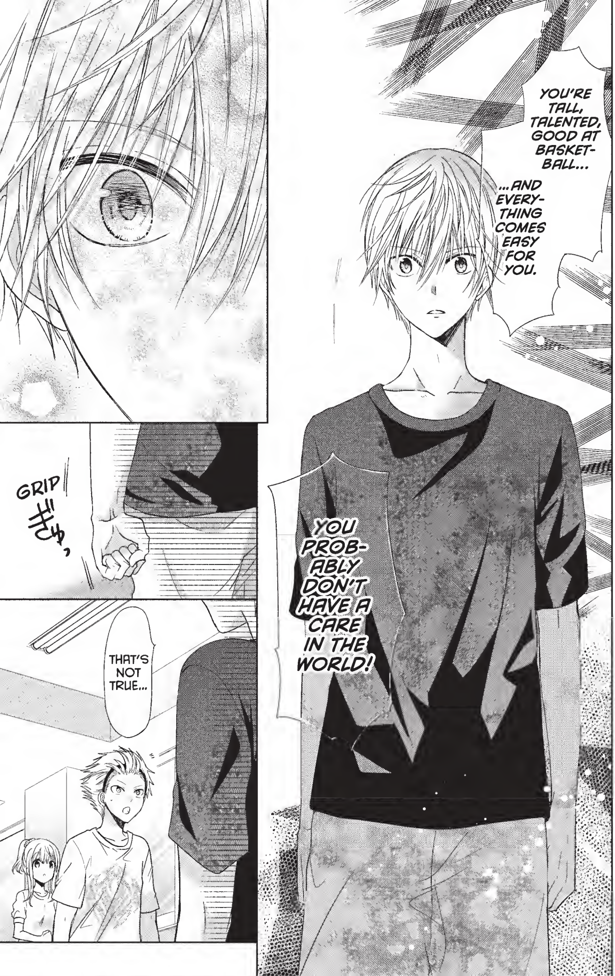
He has a beautiful but scary older sister.
Tsuoyshi! Bring me the news-paper!
Huh ?!
You go get it!
げしっ KICK

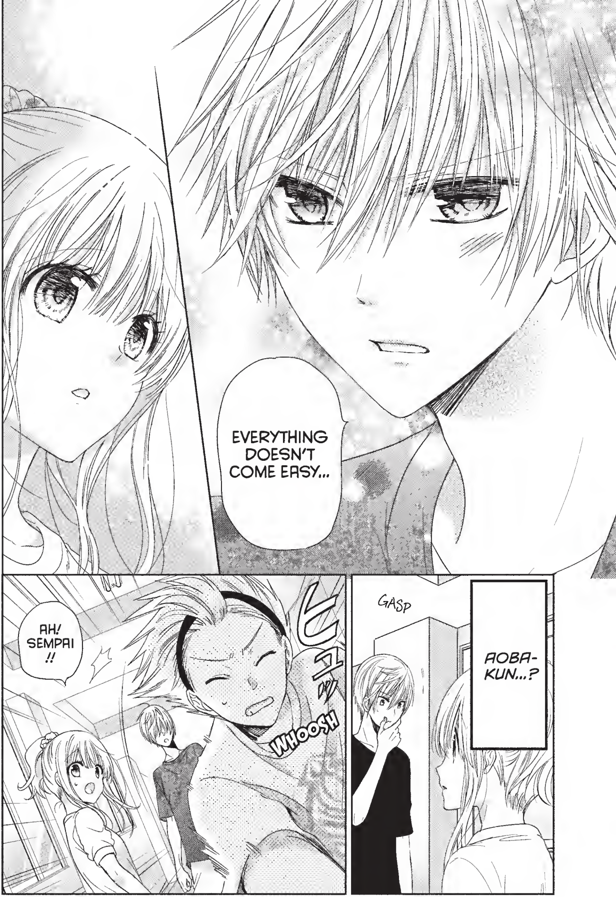

FINE! THEN JUST CUT ME FROM THE TEAM!
ダッ DASH
AH!
ザワ MURMUR
SIGH. TSUYOSHI'S STUBBORN WITH STUFF LIKE THIS.
ザワ MURMUR
YOU'RE FIRED.
WELL, ALL WE CAN DO IS LEAVE HIM BE.
MUMBLE もご
U... UH...
MUMBLE もご
FLINCH

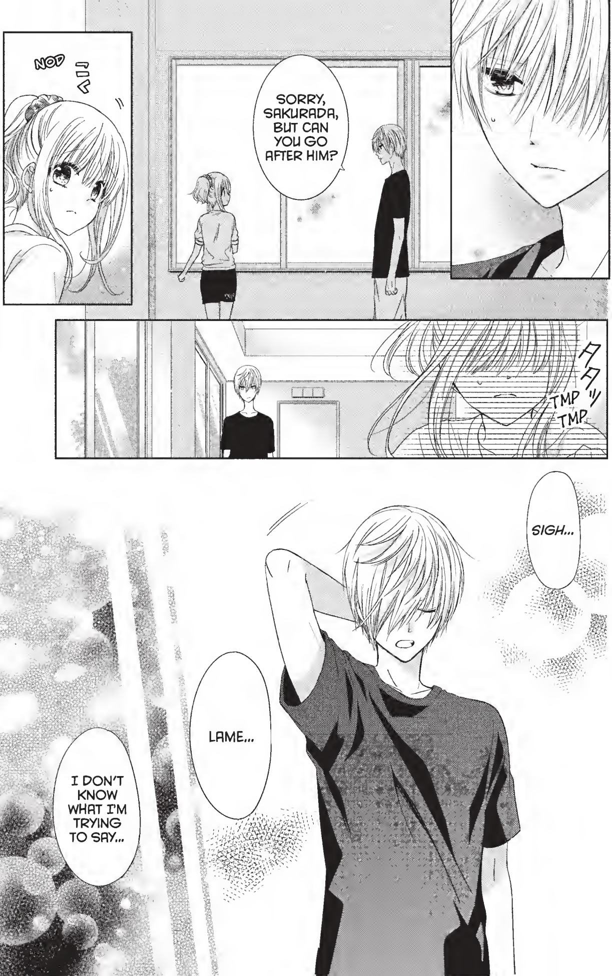

C...CAN I GO LOOK FOR HIM?
...
OKAY, CAN YOU GO GET HIM WITH AOBA?
WITH AOBA-KUN?!
OKAY...
BADUMP
ドキ
ドキ
BADUMP
SIGH...
WHY DO I HAVE TO GO WITH YOU...?!

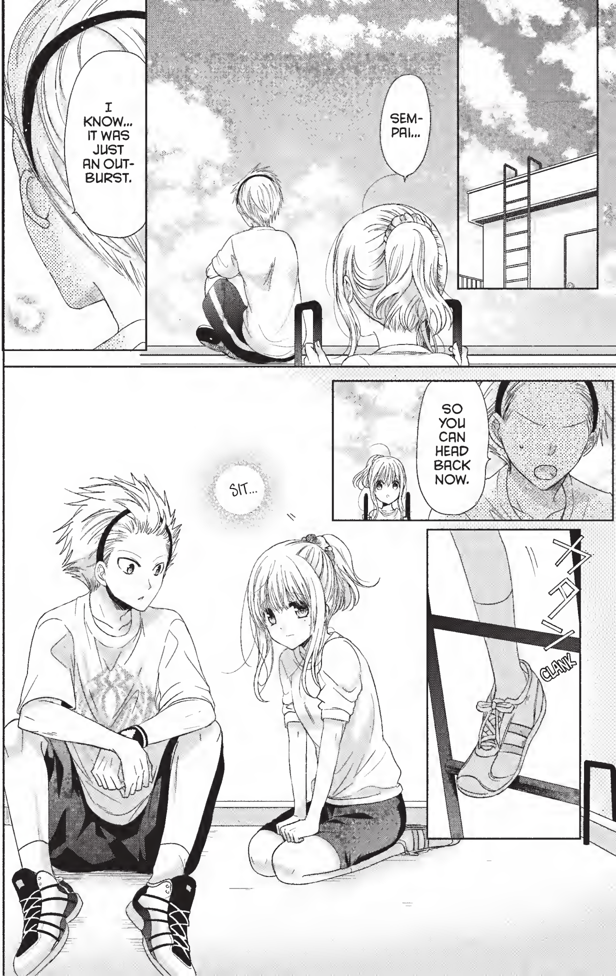

LET'S HURRY...
UH... OKAY.
SO HE WON'T TURN DOWN HIS FRIEND.
GASP
THE TEAM CAPTAIN DID SAY THAT AOBA-KUN PLAYS BASKETBALL FOR HIS FRIENDS...
I'M ONLY THINKING ABOUT AOBA-KUN'S WORRIES AGAIN!
KYO-SUKE?
spending
THAT NEW GIRL IS INTERESTING, ISN'T SHE?
?
I THOUGHT SHE'D BE MEEKER, BUT...
...LOOKS LIKE SHE ISN'T.

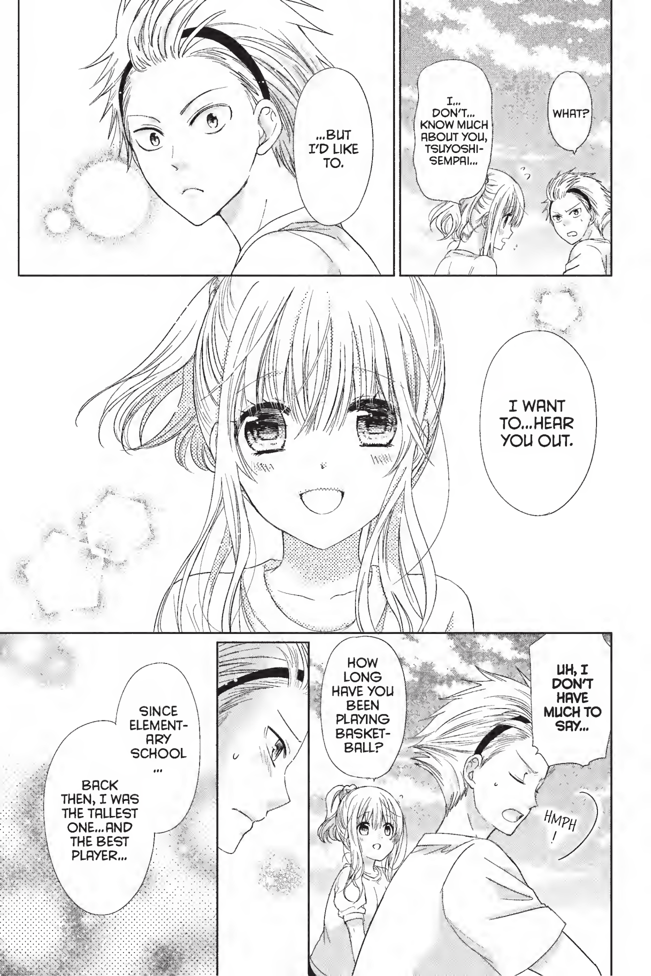

THUD
THUD
バタバタ
TSU-YOSHI-SEMPAI, COME BACK!
SHUT UP!! LEAVE ME ALONE!!
THUD
バタ
PATTER
PATTER
もてもて
I WANTED A CUTER MANAGER, DAMMIT! YOU'RE SO PLAIN AND UGLY!!
SHOCK
ガーン
IF THE MANAGER WERE CUTE, YOU WOULDN'T FOCUS ON PRACTICE!
サッ
STEP
!!
ガガーン
DOUBLE SHOCK
I'VE ALSO NOTICED THAT YOU GET WINDED.
LET'S THINK ABOUT HOW WE CAN IMPROVE THAT.
HOW COULD YOU UNDER-STAND?

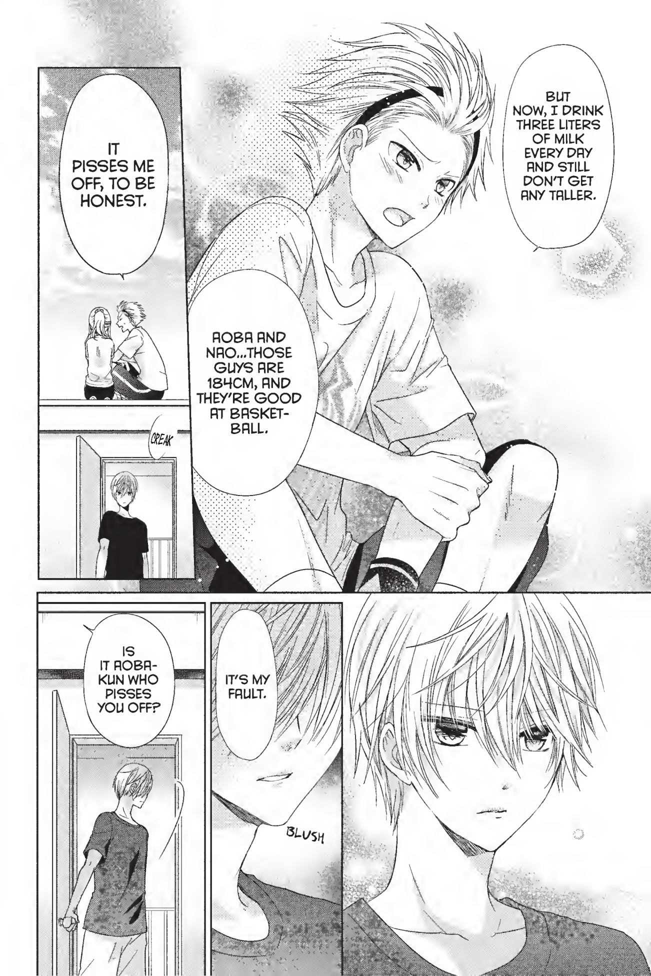

YOU'RE TALL, TALENTED, GOOD AT BASKETBALL...
...AND EVERYTHING COMES EASY FOR YOU.
YOU PROBABLY DON'T HAVE A CARE IN THE WORLD!
GRIP ぎゅっ
THAT'S NOT TRUE...

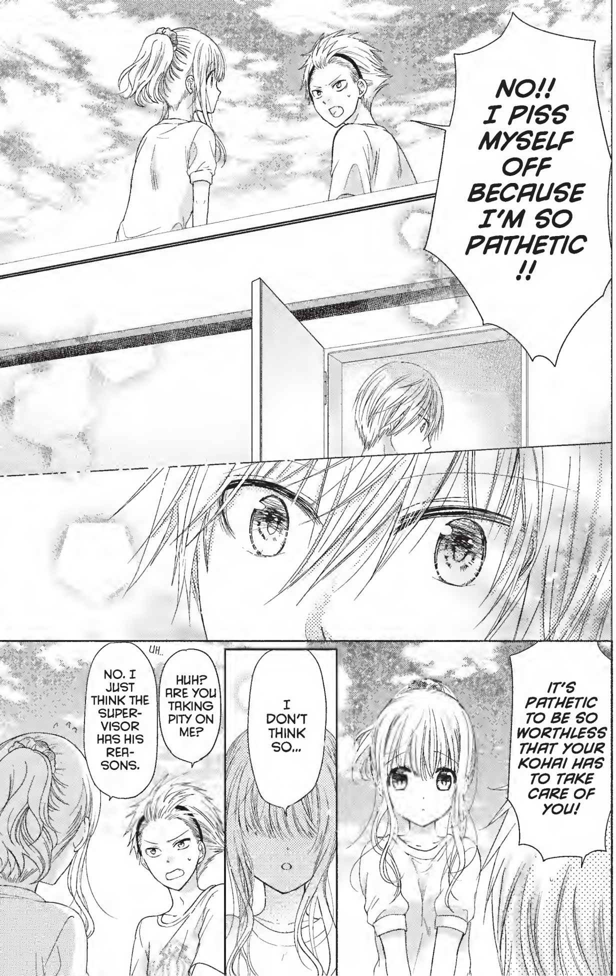

EVERYTHING DOESN'T COME EASY...
GASP
AOBA-KUN...?
ヒュッ
WHOOSH
AH! SEMPAI!!

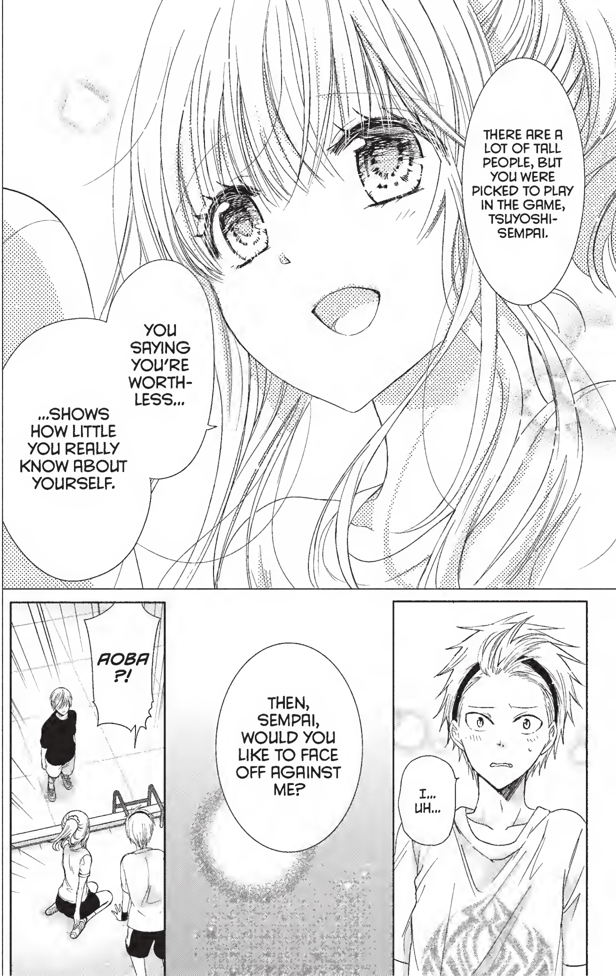

SORRY, SAKURADA, BUT CAN YOU GO AFTER HIM?
NOD
こく
タタッ
TMP TMP
SIGH...
LAME...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY...

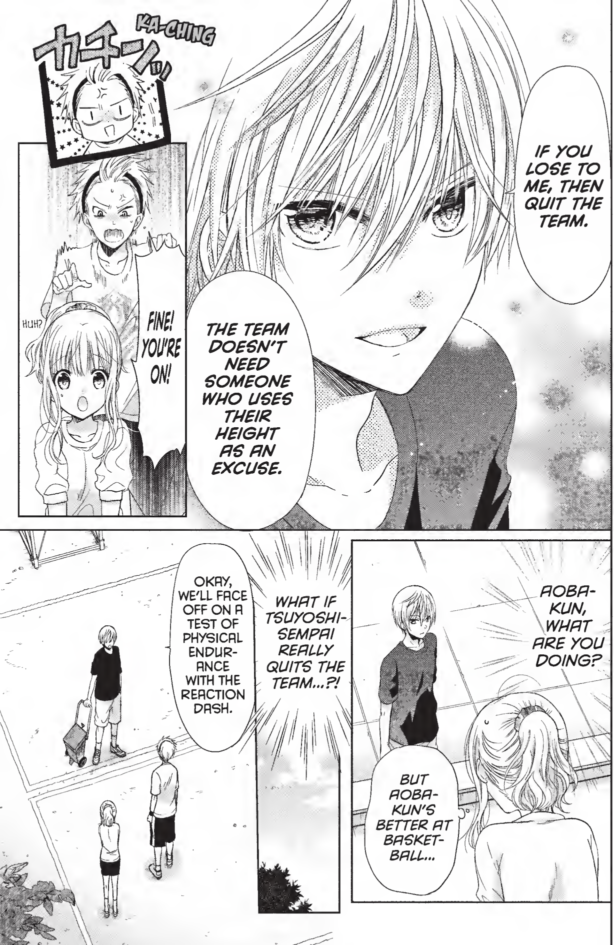

SEMPAI...
I KNOW... IT WAS JUST AN OUTBURST.
SO YOU CAN HEAD BACK NOW.
CLANK
SIT...

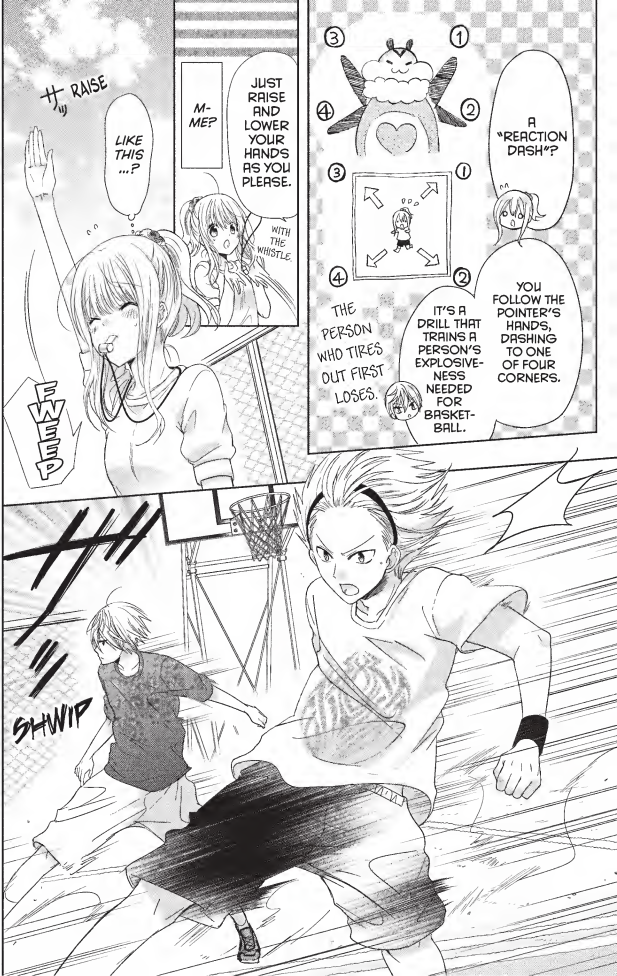

WHAT?
I... DON'T... KNOW MUCH ABOUT YOU, TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI...
...BUT I'D LIKE TO.
I WANT TO...HEAR YOU OUT.
UH, I DON'T HAVE MUCH TO SAY...
HMPH!
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING BASKETBALL?
SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...
BACK THEN, I WAS THE TALLEST ONE...AND THE BEST PLAYER...

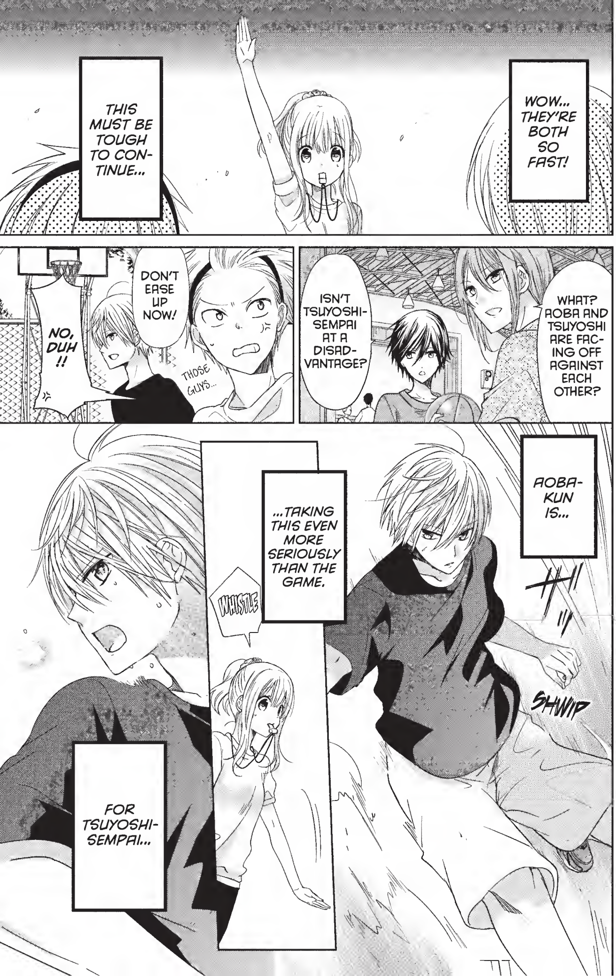

BUT NOW, I DRINK THREE LITERS OF MILK EVERY DAY AND STILL DON'T GET ANY TALLER.
AOBA AND NAO...THOSE GUYS ARE 184CM, AND THEY'RE GOOD AT BASKETBALL.
IT PISSES ME OFF, TO BE HONEST.
CREAK
IT'S MY FAULT.
BLUSH
IS IT AOBA-KUN WHO PISSES YOU OFF?

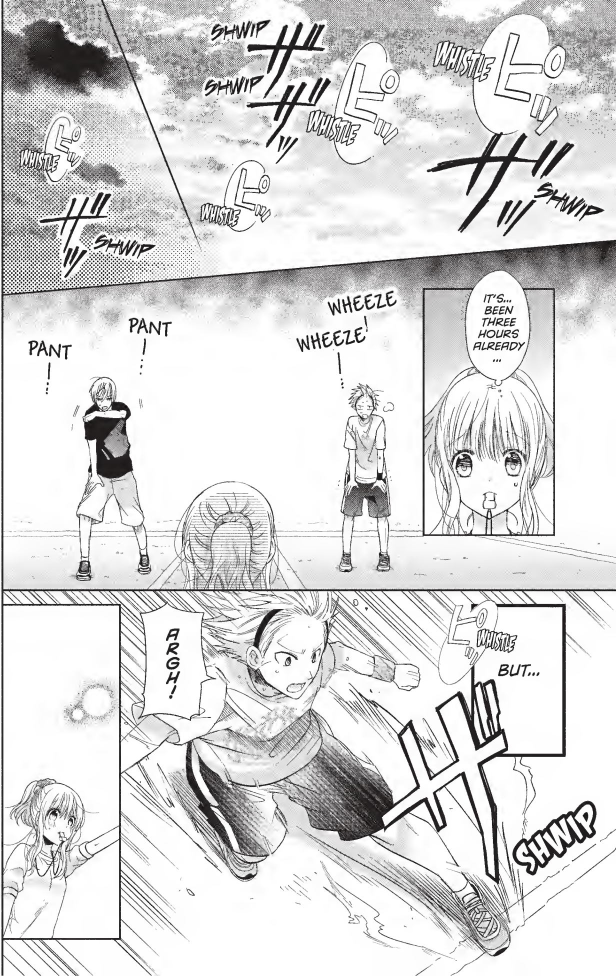

NO!! I PISS MYSELF OFF BECAUSE I'M SO PATHETIC !!
IT'S PATHETIC TO BE SO WORTHLESS THAT YOUR KOHAI HAS TO TAKE CARE OF YOU!
I DON'T THINK SO...
HUH? ARE YOU TAKING PITY ON ME?
UH..
NO. I JUST THINK THE SUPERVISOR HAS HIS REASONS.

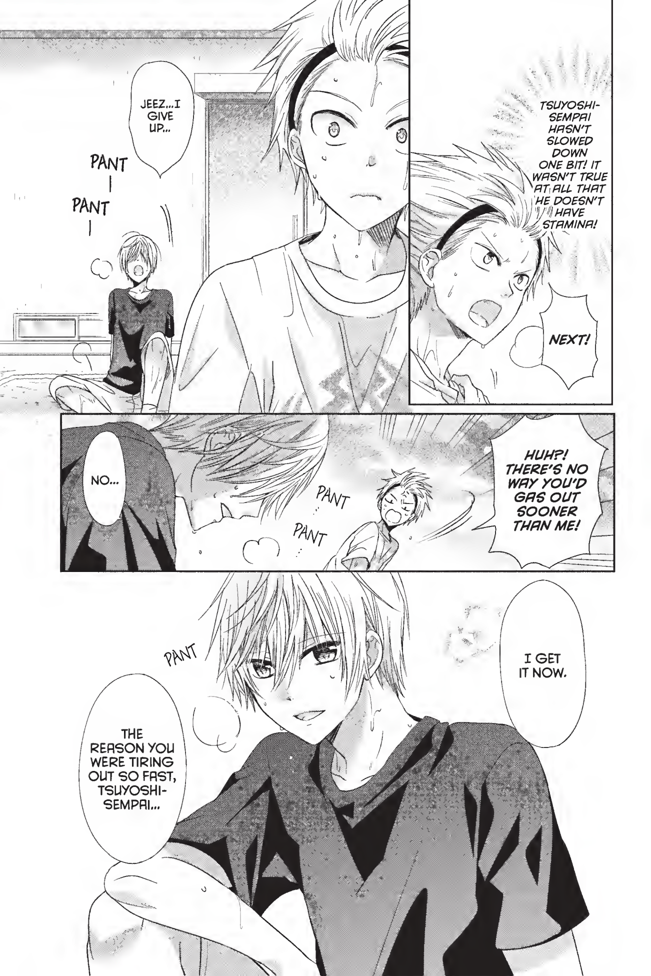

THERE ARE A LOT OF TALL PEOPLE, BUT YOU WERE PICKED TO PLAY IN THE GAME, TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI.
YOU SAYING YOU'RE WORTHLESS...
...SHOWS HOW LITTLE YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT YOURSELF.
THEN, SEMPAI, WOULD YOU LIKE TO FACE OFF AGAINST ME?
I... UH...
AOBA?!

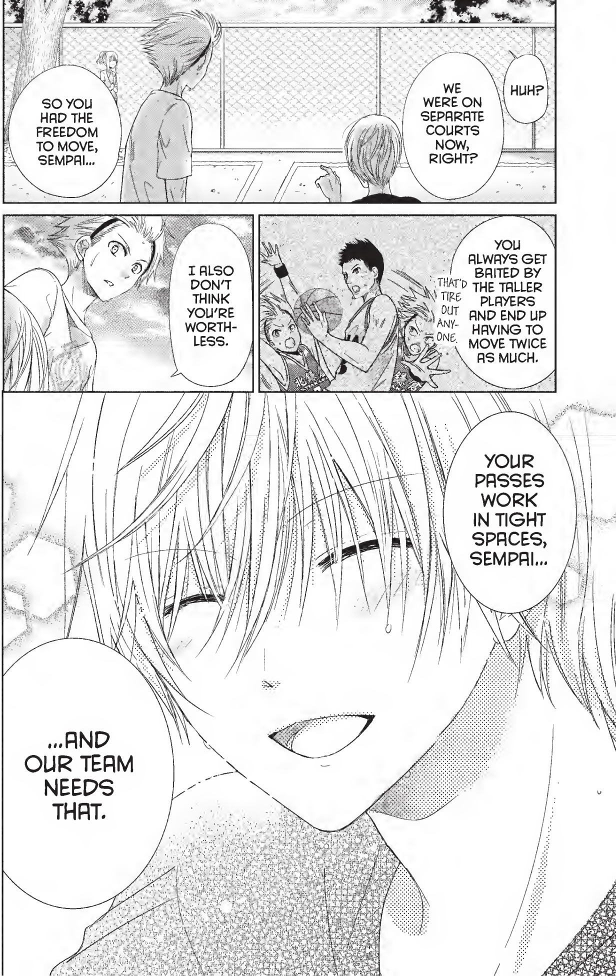

IF YOU LOSE TO ME, THEN QUIT THE TEAM.
THE TEAM DOESN'T NEED SOMEONE WHO USES THEIR HEIGHT AS AN EXCUSE.
カチーン!!
KA-CHING
FINE! YOU'RE ON!
HUH?
AOBA-KUN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
BUT AOBA-KUN'S BETTER AT BASKETBALL...
WHAT IF TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI REALLY QUITS THE TEAM...?!
OKAY, WE'LL FACE OFF ON A TEST OF PHYSICAL ENDURANCE WITH THE REACTION DASH.

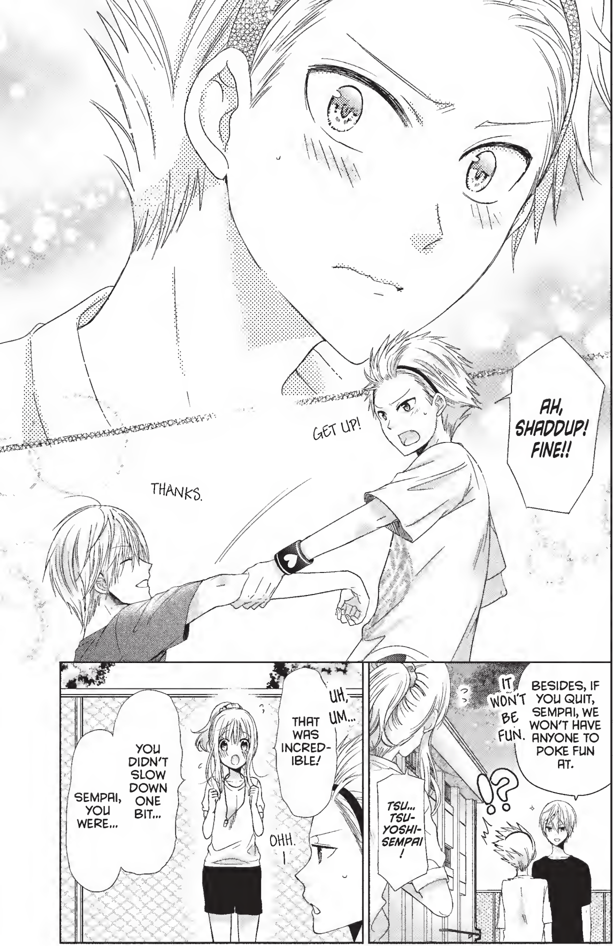

A "REACTION DASH"?
③ ① ④ ②
③ ① ④ ②
YOU FOLLOW THE POINTER'S HANDS, DASHING TO ONE OF FOUR CORNERS.
IT'S A DRILL THAT TRAINS A PERSON'S EXPLOSIVENESS NEEDED FOR BASKETBALL.
THE PERSON WHO TIRES OUT FIRST LOSES.
JUST RAISE AND LOWER YOUR HANDS AS YOU PLEASE.
WITH THE WHISTLE.
M-ME?
LIKE THIS ...?
サッ RAISE
FWEEP
SHWIP

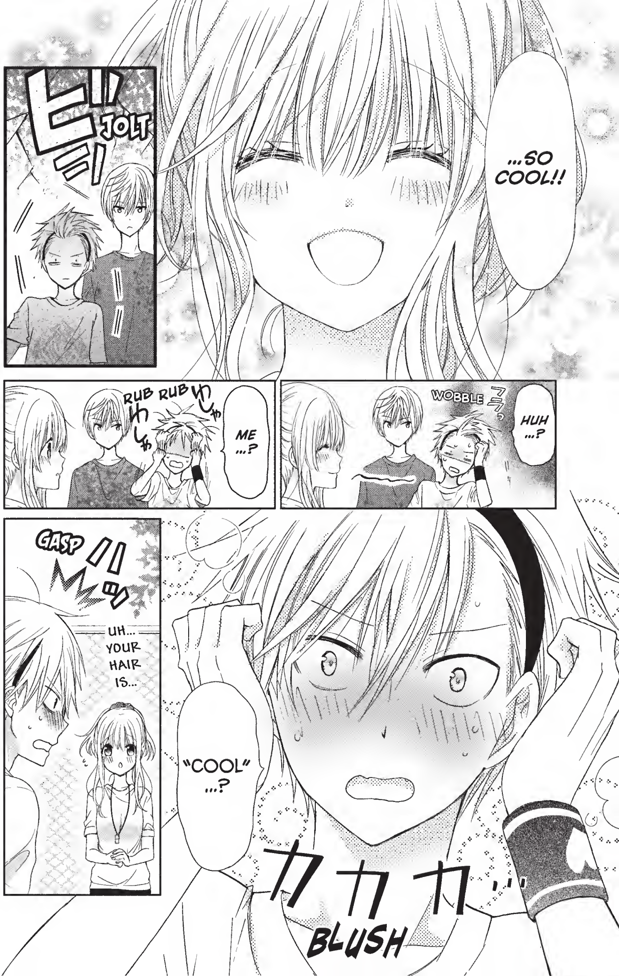

WOW... THEY'RE BOTH SO FAST!
THIS MUST BE TOUGH TO CONTINUE...
WHAT? AOBA AND TSUYOSHI ARE FACING OFF AGAINST EACH OTHER?
ISN'T TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI AT A DISADVANTAGE?
DON'T EASE UP NOW!
THOSE GUYS...
NO, DUH!!
AOBA-KUN IS...
...TAKING THIS EVEN MORE SERIOUSLY THAN THE GAME.
WHISTLE
SHWIP
FOR TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI...

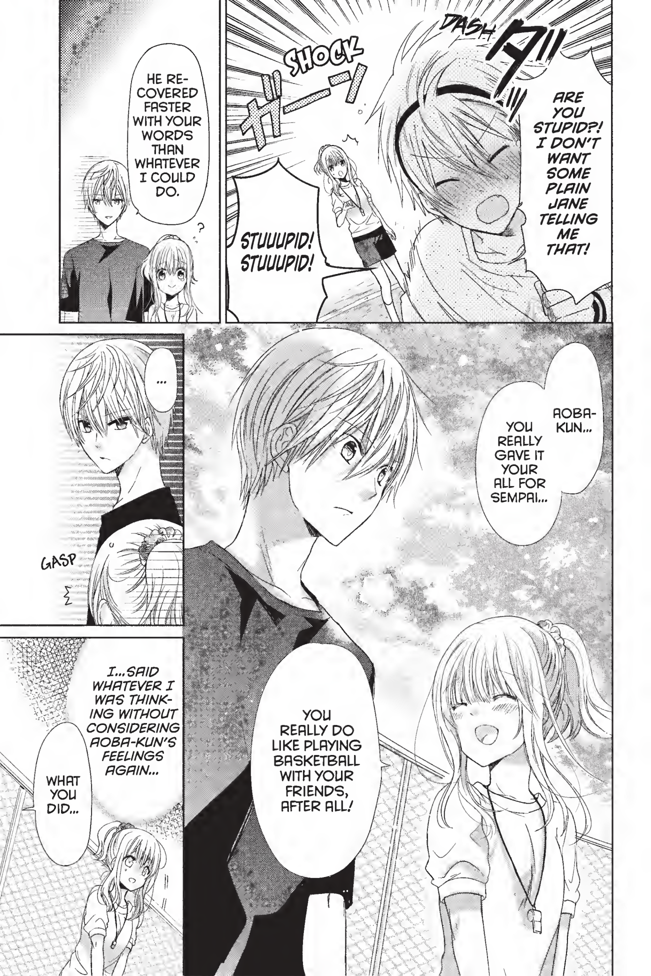

WHISTLE
SHWIP
SHWIP
SHWIP
WHISTLE
WHISTLE
WHISTLE
SHWIP
IT'S... BEEN THREE HOURS ALREADY...
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
PANT
PANT
WHISTLE
BUT...
SHWIP
ARGH!

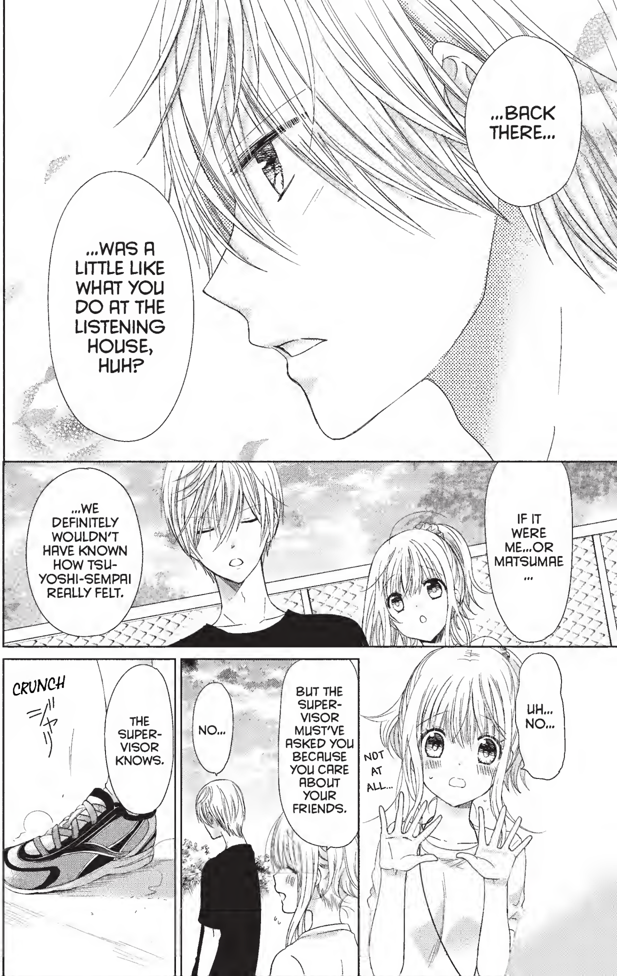

TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI HASN'T SLOWED DOWN ONE BIT! IT WASN'T TRUE AT ALL THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE STAMINA!
NEXT!
JEEZ...I GIVE UP...
PANT
PANT
HUH?! THERE'S NO WAY YOU'D GAS OUT SOONER THAN ME!
PANT
PANT
NO...
I GET IT NOW.
PANT
THE REASON YOU WERE TIRING OUT SO FAST, TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI...

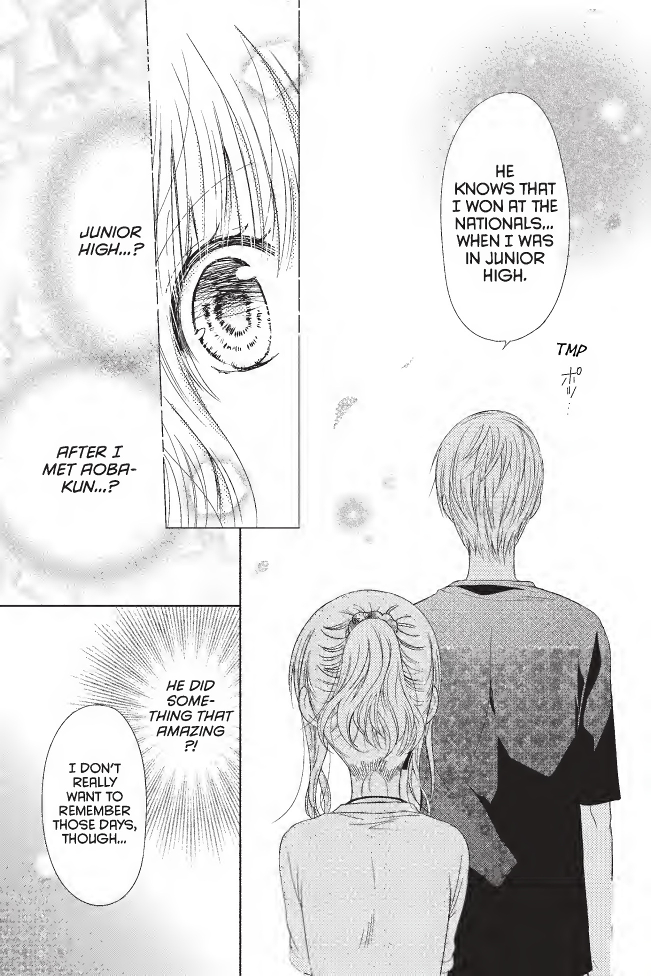

HUH?
WE WERE ON SEPARATE COURTS NOW, RIGHT?
SO YOU HAD THE FREEDOM TO MOVE, SEMPAI...
YOU ALWAYS GET BAITED BY THE TALLER PLAYERS AND END UP HAVING TO MOVE TWICE AS MUCH.
THAT'D TIRE OUT ANYONE.
I ALSO DON'T THINK YOU'RE WORTHLESS.
YOUR PASSES WORK IN TIGHT SPACES, SEMPAI...
...AND OUR TEAM NEEDS THAT.

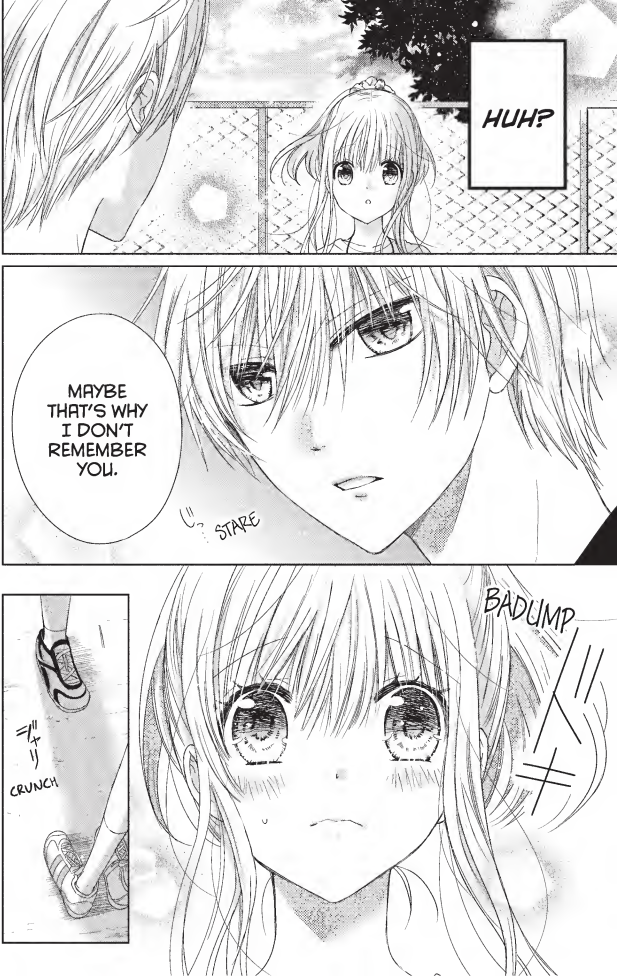

AH, SHADDUP! FINE!!
GET UP!
THANKS.
BESIDES, IF YOU QUIT, SEMPAI, WE WON'T HAVE ANYONE TO POKE FUN AT.
IT WON'T BE FUN.
!?
TSU... TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI!
UH, UM...
THAT WAS INCREDIBLE!
YOU DIDN'T SLOW DOWN ONE BIT...
SEMPAI, YOU WERE...
OHH. !

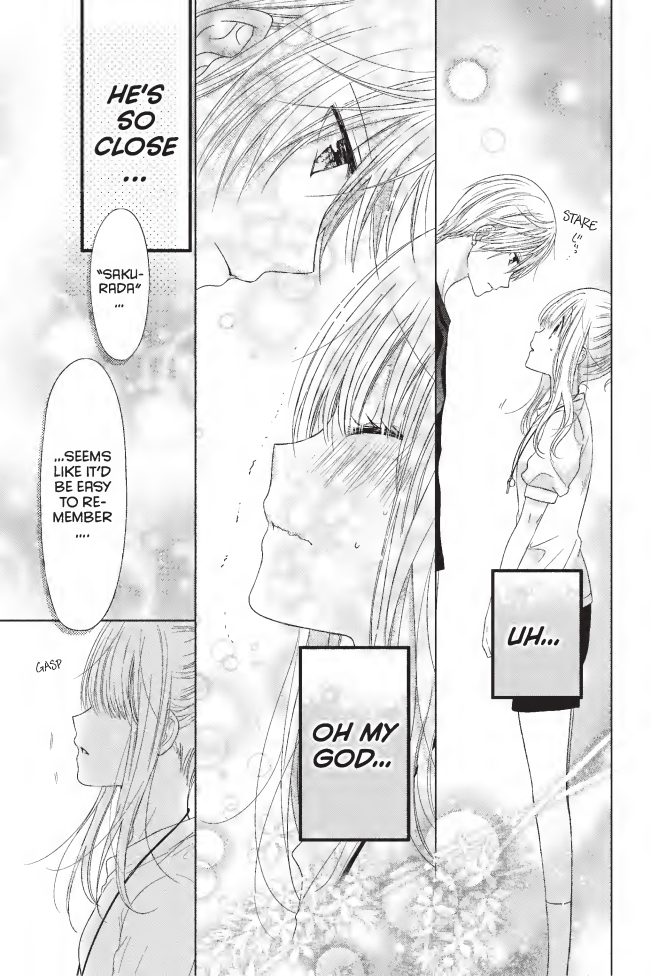

...SO COOL!!
ヒッ
JOLT
フラッ
WOBBLE
HUH ...?
わしゃわしゃ
RUB RUB
ME ...?
"COOL" ...?
カカカッ
BLUSH
ハッ
GASP
UH... YOUR HAIR IS...

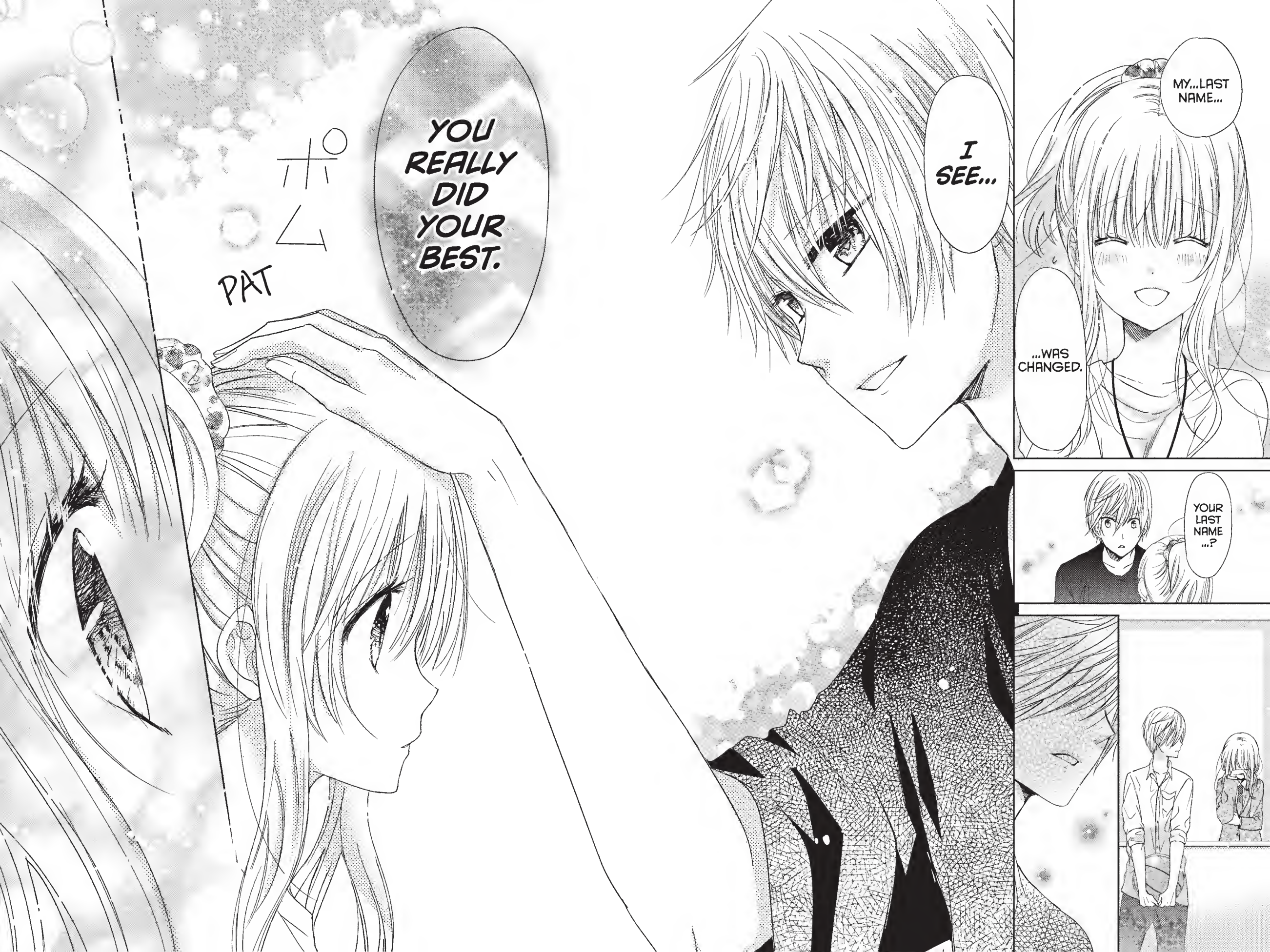

DASH
ARE YOU STUPID?! I DON'T WANT SOME PLAIN JANE TELLING ME THAT!
SHOCK
STUUUPID! STUUUPID!
HE RECOVERED FASTER WITH YOUR WORDS THAN WHATEVER I COULD DO.
AOBA-KUN...
YOU REALLY GAVE IT YOUR ALL FOR SEMPAI...
YOU REALLY DO LIKE PLAYING BASKETBALL WITH YOUR FRIENDS, AFTER ALL!
...
GASP
I...SAID WHATEVER I WAS THINKING WITHOUT CONSIDERING AOBA-KUN'S FEELINGS AGAIN...
WHAT YOU DID...

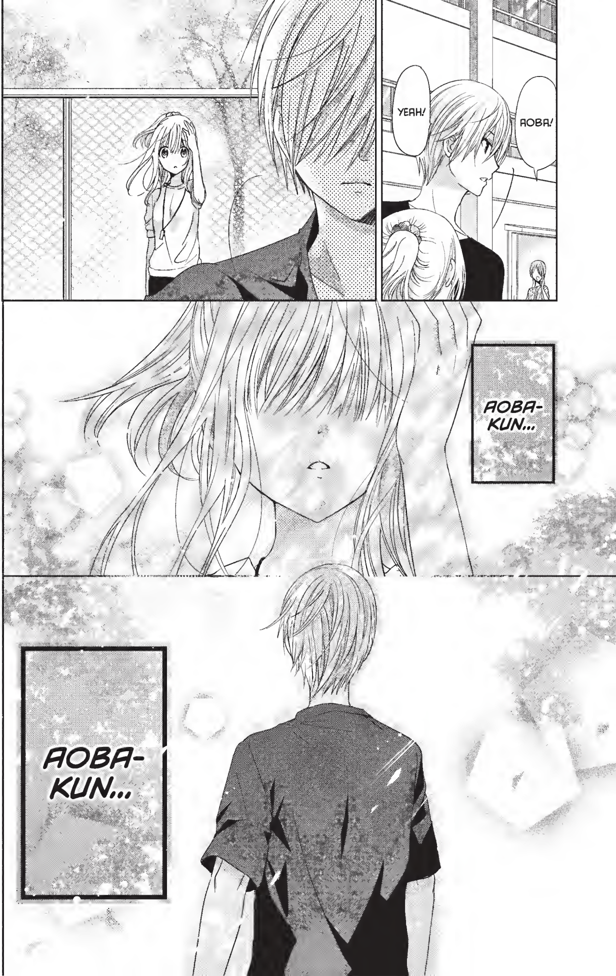

...BACK THERE...
...WAS A LITTLE LIKE WHAT YOU DO AT THE LISTENING HOUSE, HUH?
IF IT WERE ME...OR MATSUMAE ...
...WE DEFINITELY WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN HOW TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI REALLY FELT.
UH... NO...
NOT AT ALL...
BUT THE SUPERVISOR MUST'VE ASKED YOU BECAUSE YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS.
NO...
THE SUPERVISOR KNOWS.
CRUNCH
ジャリ

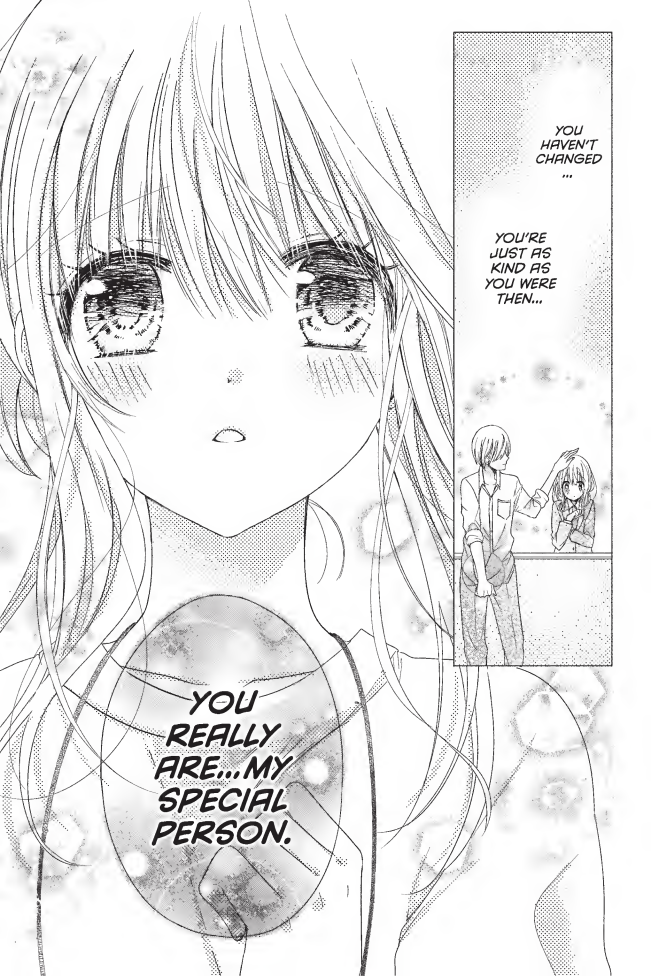

HE KNOWS THAT I WON AT THE NATIONALS... WHEN I WAS IN JUNIOR HIGH.
TMP
ポツ…
JUNIOR HIGH...?
AFTER I MET AOBA-KUN...?
HE DID SOMETHING THAT AMAZING?!
I DON'T REALLY WANT TO REMEMBER THOSE DAYS, THOUGH...

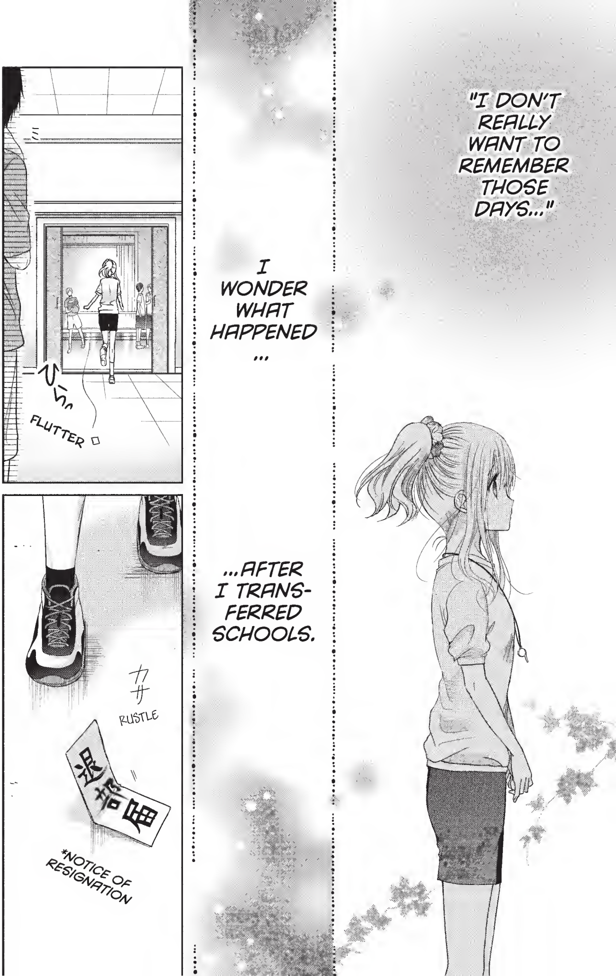

HUH?
MAYBE THAT'S WHY I DON'T REMEMBER YOU.
STARE
BADUMP
ザリ
CRUNCH

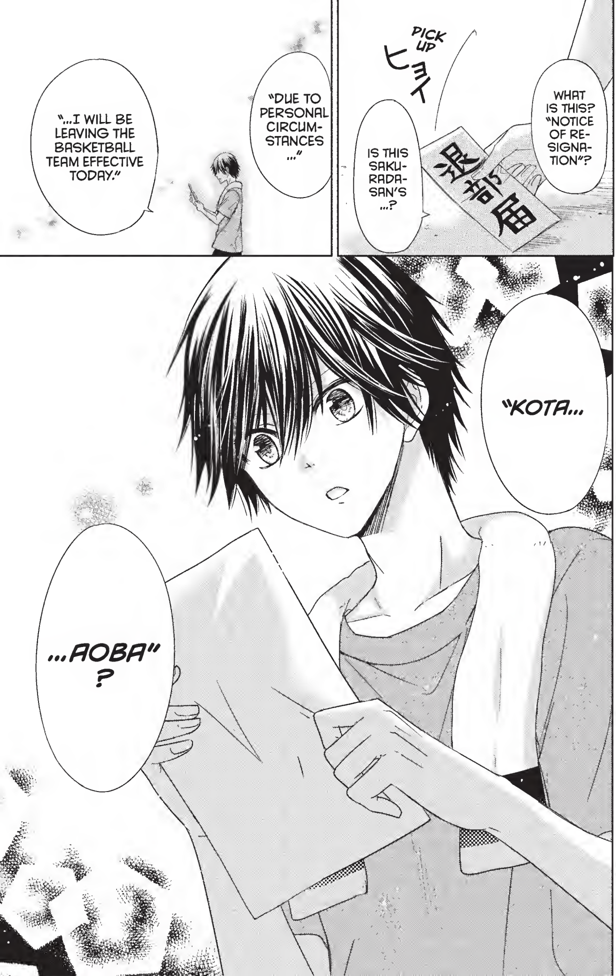

STARE
UH...
OH MY GOD...
HE'S SO CLOSE...
"SAKURADA"...
...SEEMS LIKE IT'D BE EASY TO REMEMBER....
GASP

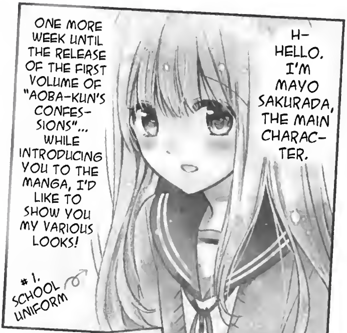

MY...LAST NAME...
...WAS CHANGED.
YOUR LAST NAME...?
I SEE...
YOU REALLY DID YOUR BEST.
ポム
PAT

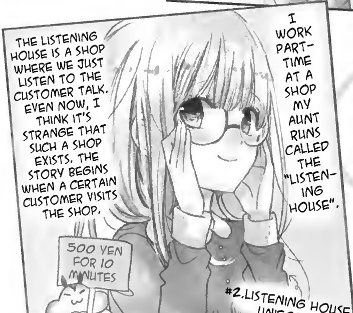

AOBA!
YEAH!
AOBA-KUN...
AOBA-KUN...


YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED ...
YOU'RE JUST AS KIND AS YOU WERE THEN...
YOU REALLY ARE...MY SPECIAL PERSON.


"I DON'T REALLY WANT TO REMEMBER THOSE DAYS..."
I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED...
...AFTER I TRANSFERRED SCHOOLS.
FLUTTER
カサ
RUSTLE
退部届
*NOTICE OF RESIGNATION


PICK UP
ヒョイ
WHAT IS THIS? "NOTICE OF RESIGNATION"?
退部届
IS THIS SAKURADA-SAN'S ...?
"DUE TO PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ..."
"...I WILL BE LEAVING THE BASKETBALL TEAM EFFECTIVE TODAY."
"KOTA...
...AOBA"?


H-HELLO. I'M MAYO SAKURADA, THE MAIN CHARACTER.
ONE MORE WEEK UNTIL THE RELEASE OF THE FIRST VOLUME OF "AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS"... WHILE INTRODUCING YOU TO THE MANGA, I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU MY VARIOUS LOOKS!
#1. SCHOOL UNIFORM

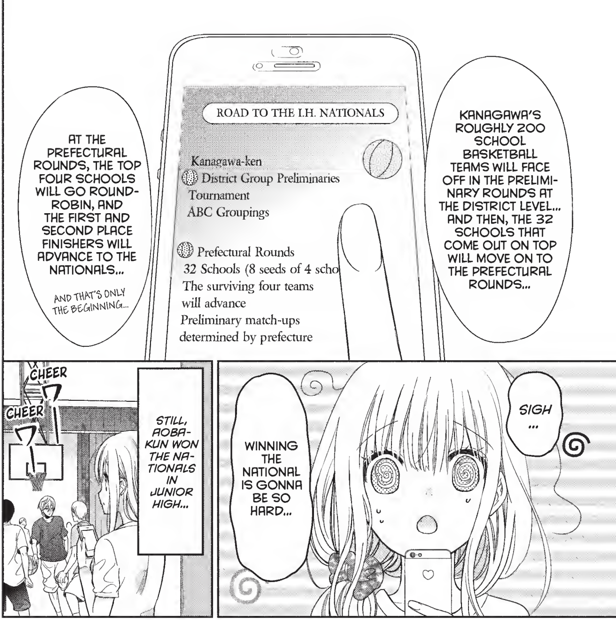

I WORK PART-TIME AT A SHOP MY AUNT RUNS CALLED THE "LISTENING HOUSE".
THE LISTENING HOUSE IS A SHOP WHERE WE JUST LISTEN TO THE CUSTOMER TALK. EVEN NOW, I THINK IT'S STRANGE THAT SUCH A SHOP EXISTS. THE STORY BEGINS WHEN A CERTAIN CUSTOMER VISITS THE SHOP.
500 YEN FOR 10 MINUTES
#2. LISTENING HOUSE UNIFORM

AOBAKUN
NI
KIKITAI
KOTO

THESE ARE ILLUSTRATIONS THAT WERE PUBLISHED ON TWITTER WHEN THE FIRST VOLUME WAS BEING RELEASED.

Time. 6

I WONDER WHY.



ROAD TO THE I.H. NATIONALS

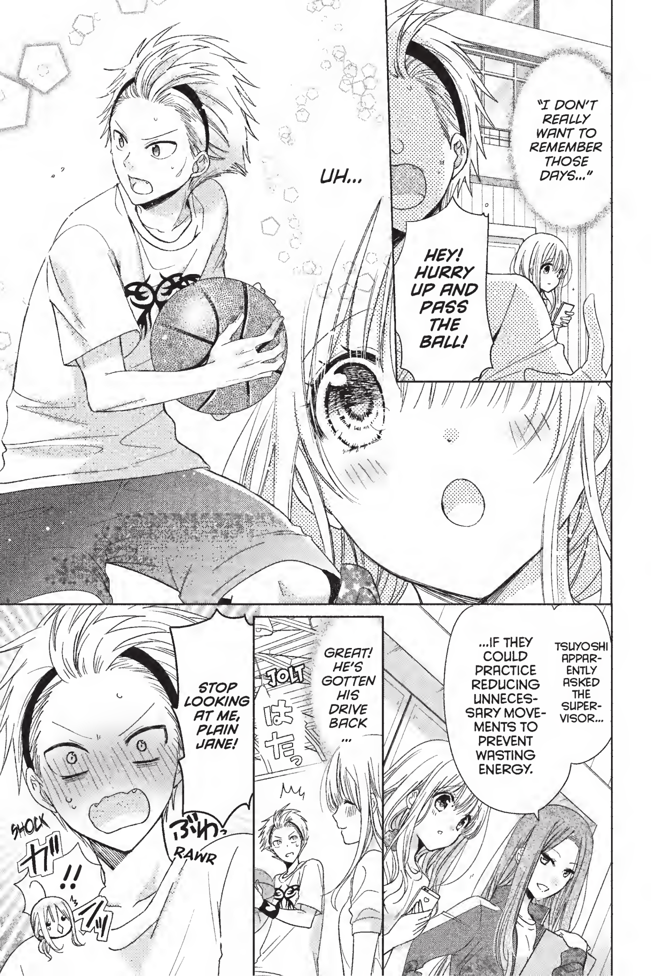
Kanagawa-ken

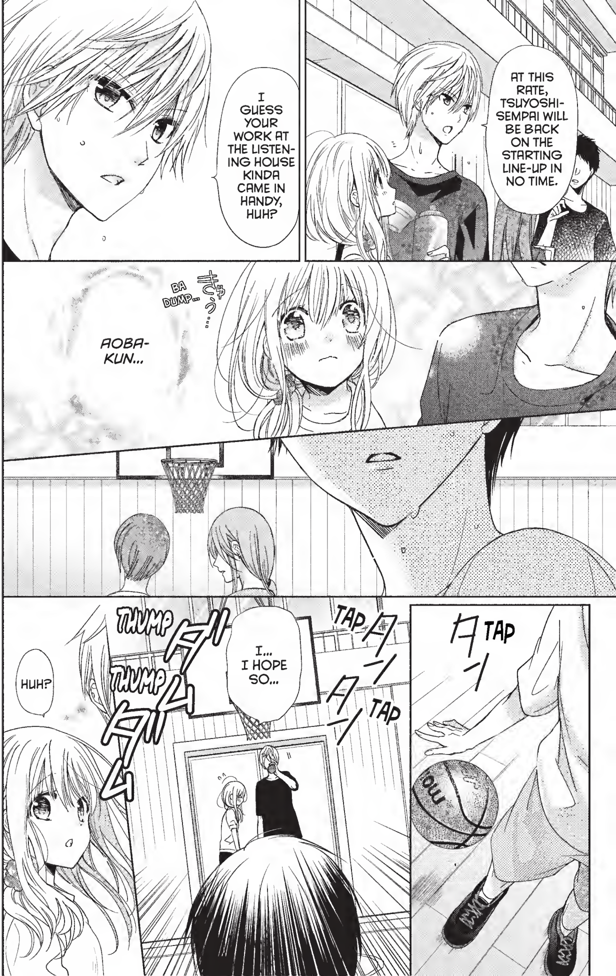
District Group Preliminaries
Tournament
ABC Groupings

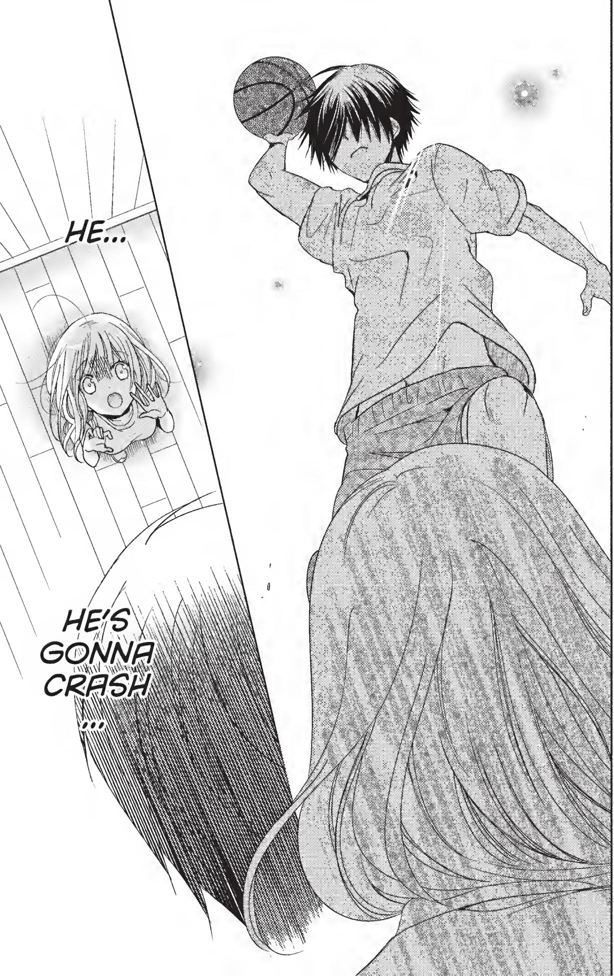
Prefectural Rounds
32 Schools (8 seeds of 4 scho
The surviving four teams
will advance
Preliminary match-ups
determined by prefecture

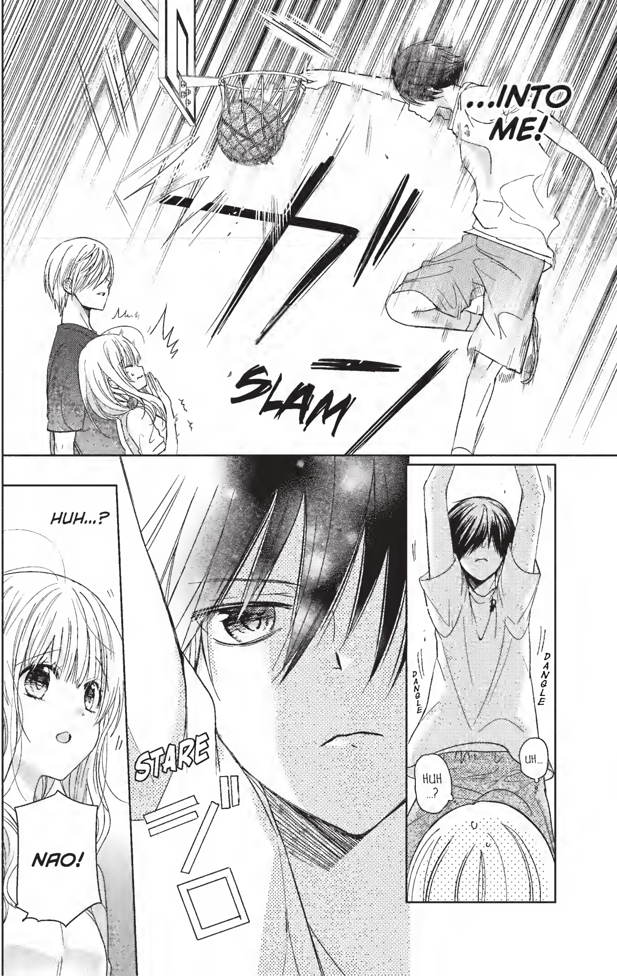
KANAGAWA'S ROUGHLY 200 SCHOOL BASKETBALL TEAMS WILL FACE OFF IN THE PRELIMINARY ROUNDS AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL... AND THEN, THE 32 SCHOOLS THAT COME OUT ON TOP WILL MOVE ON TO THE PREFECTURAL ROUNDS...
AT THE PREFECTURAL ROUNDS, THE TOP FOUR SCHOOLS WILL GO ROUND-ROBIN, AND THE FIRST AND SECOND PLACE FINISHERS WILL ADVANCE TO THE NATIONALS...
AND THAT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING...
SIGH...
WINNING THE NATIONAL IS GONNA BE SO HARD...
STILL, AOBA-KUN WON THE NATIONALS IN JUNIOR HIGH...
CHEER
CHEER

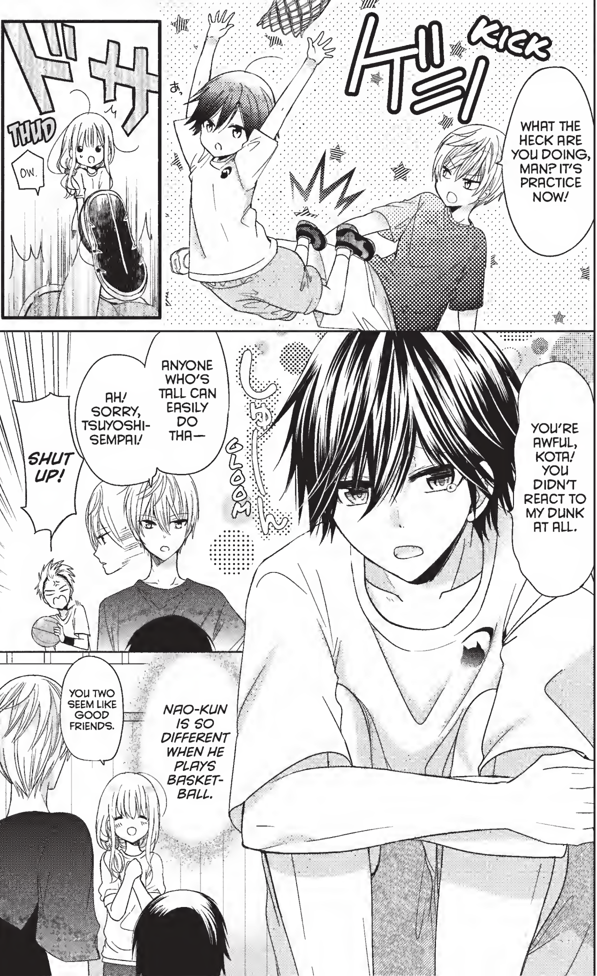
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

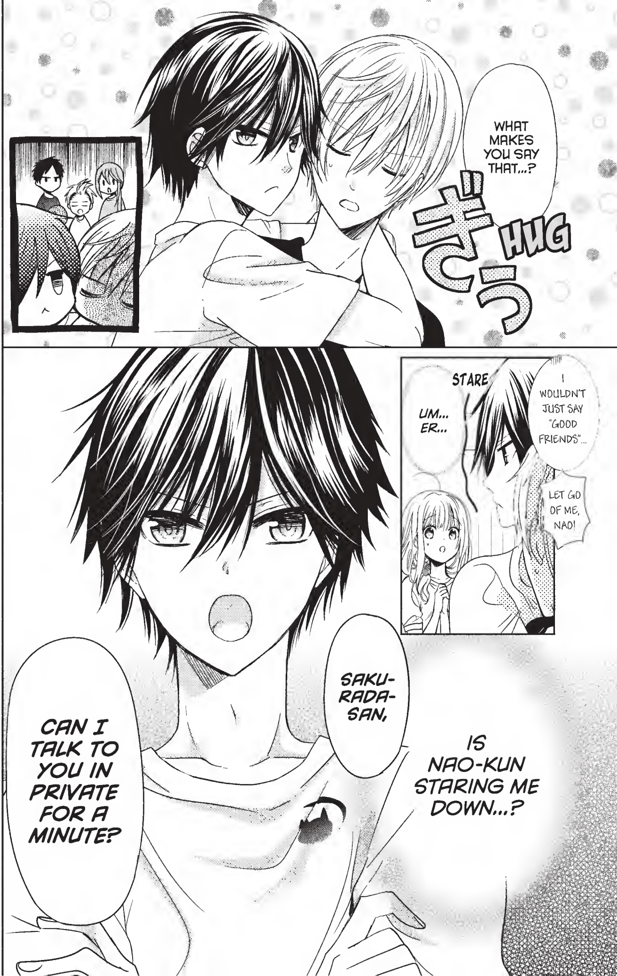

"I DON'T REALLY WANT TO REMEMBER THOSE DAYS..."
HEY! HURRY UP AND PASS THE BALL!
UH...
TSUYOSHI APPARENTLY ASKED THE SUPERVISOR...
...IF THEY COULD PRACTICE REDUCING UNNECESSARY MOVEMENTS TO PREVENT WASTING ENERGY.
GREAT! HE'S GOTTEN HIS DRIVE BACK ...
JOLT
はたっ
STOP LOOKING AT ME, PLAIN JANE!
ぶわっ
RAWR
SHOCK
ガ
!!
ーン

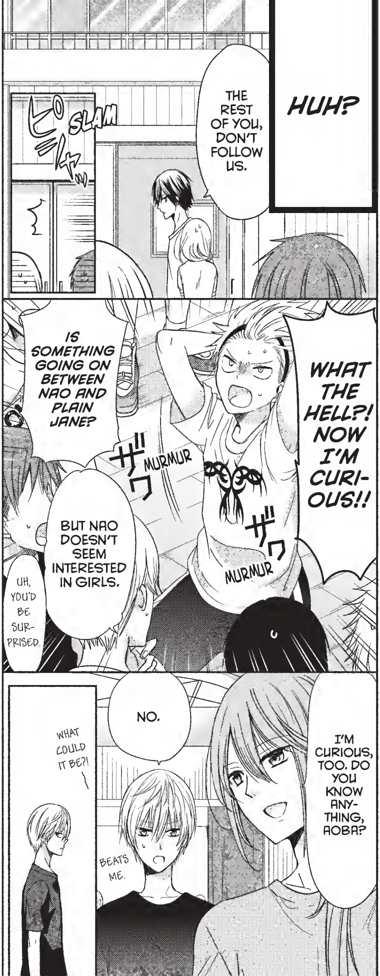

AT THIS RATE, TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI WILL BE BACK ON THE STARTING LINE-UP IN NO TIME.
I GUESS YOUR WORK AT THE LISTENING HOUSE KINDA CAME IN HANDY, HUH?
きゅう…
BA DUMP...
AOBA-KUN...
タン
TAP
タン
TAP
タン
TAP
I... I HOPE SO...
ダム
THUMP
ダム
THUMP
HUH?


HE...
HE'S GONNA CRASH ...

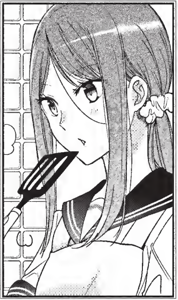

...INTO ME!
SLAM
DANGLE
DANGLE
UH...
HUH...?
STARE
HUH...?
NAO!


KICK
あ、
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING, MAN? IT'S PRACTICE NOW!
ドサ
THUD
ム
OW.
YOU'RE AWFUL, KOTA! YOU DIDN'T REACT TO MY DUNK AT ALL.
しゅーん
GLOOM
ANYONE WHO'S TALL CAN EASILY DO THA—
AH! SORRY, TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI!
SHUT UP!
NAO-KUN IS SO DIFFERENT WHEN HE PLAYS BASKET-BALL.
YOU TWO SEEM LIKE GOOD FRIENDS.

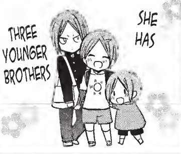

WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT...?
ぎゅう
HUG
I WOULDN'T JUST SAY "GOOD FRIENDS"...
LET GO OF ME, NAO!
STARE
UM... ER...
IS NAO-KUN STARING ME DOWN...?
SAKURADA-SAN,
CAN I TALK TO YOU IN PRIVATE FOR A MINUTE?

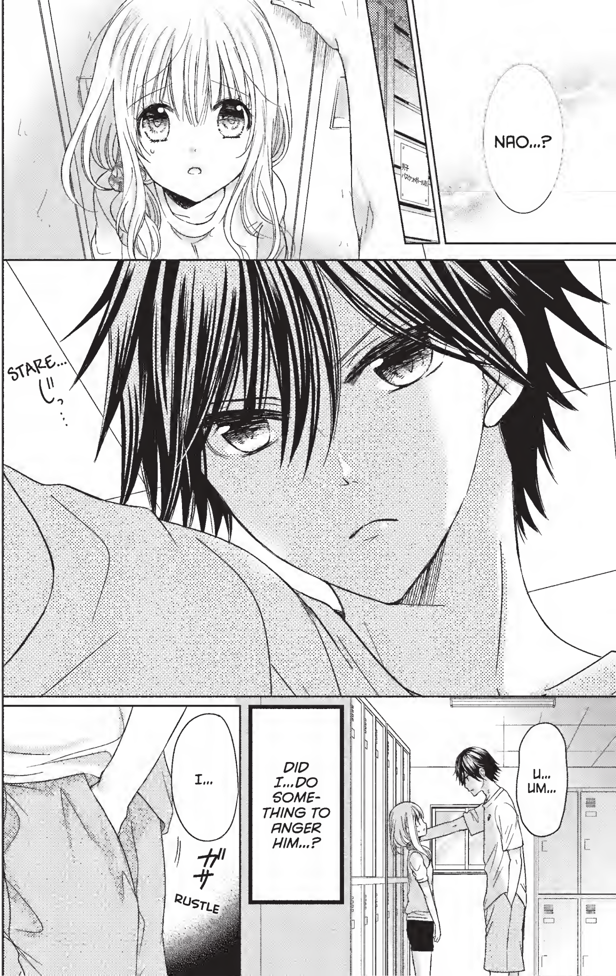

HUH?
THE REST OF YOU, DON'T FOLLOW US.
SLAM
WHAT THE HELL?! NOW I'M CURIOUS!!
IS SOMETHING GOING ON BETWEEN NAO AND PLAIN JANE?
MURMUR
MURMUR
BUT NAO DOESN'T SEEM INTERESTED IN GIRLS.
UH, YOU'D BE SURPRISED.
I'M CURIOUS, TOO. DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING, AOBA?
NO.
WHAT COULD IT BE?!
BEATS ME.

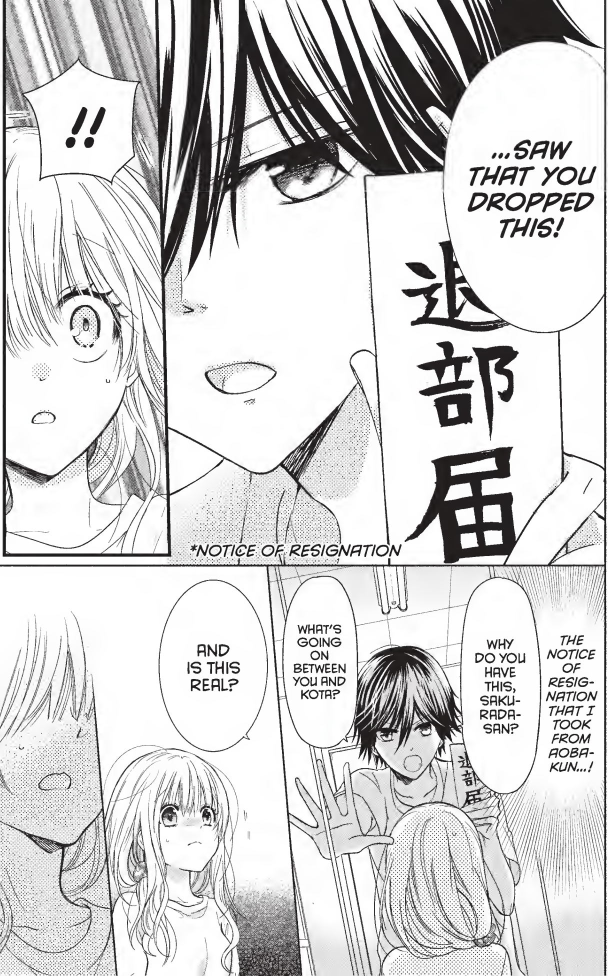
KYOKO MATSUMAE
BORN DECEMBER 16TH
BLOOD TYPE: B
HEIGHT: 161CM
FAVORITE FOOD:
ROLLED OMELETTE
DORAYAKI (RED-BEAN PANCAKE)

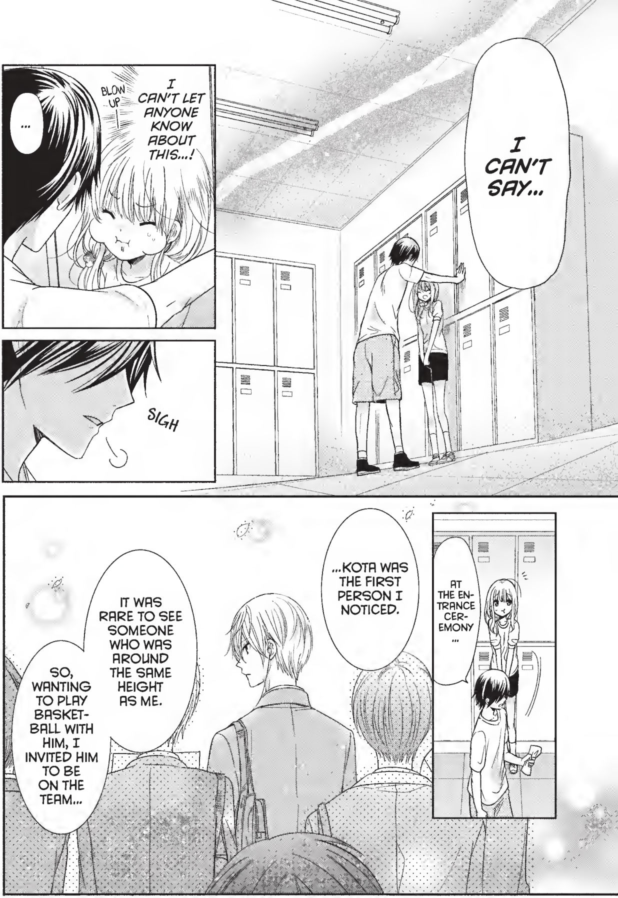


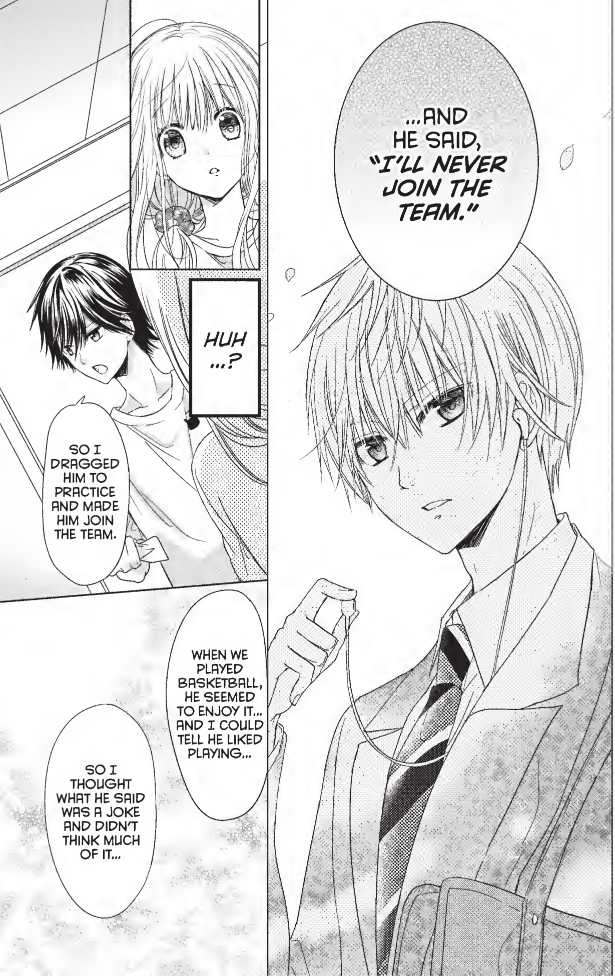
6:30AM
PACKING LUNCH
FOR HER FAMILY

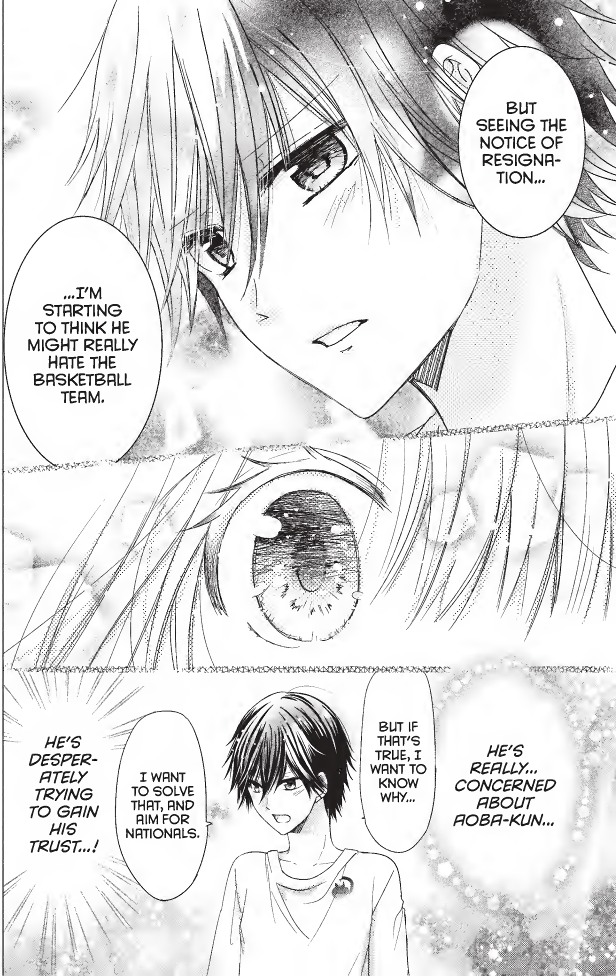

SHE HAS THREE YOUNGER BROTHERS

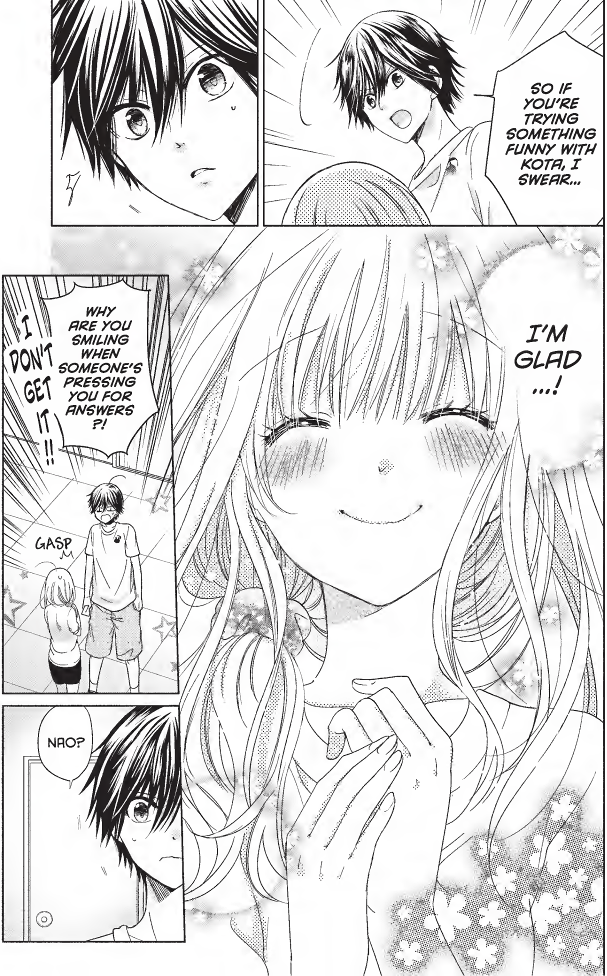

NAO...?
男子 バスケットボール部
STARE...
じっ…
U... UM...
DID I...DO SOMETHING TO ANGER HIM...?
I...
ガサ
RUSTLE

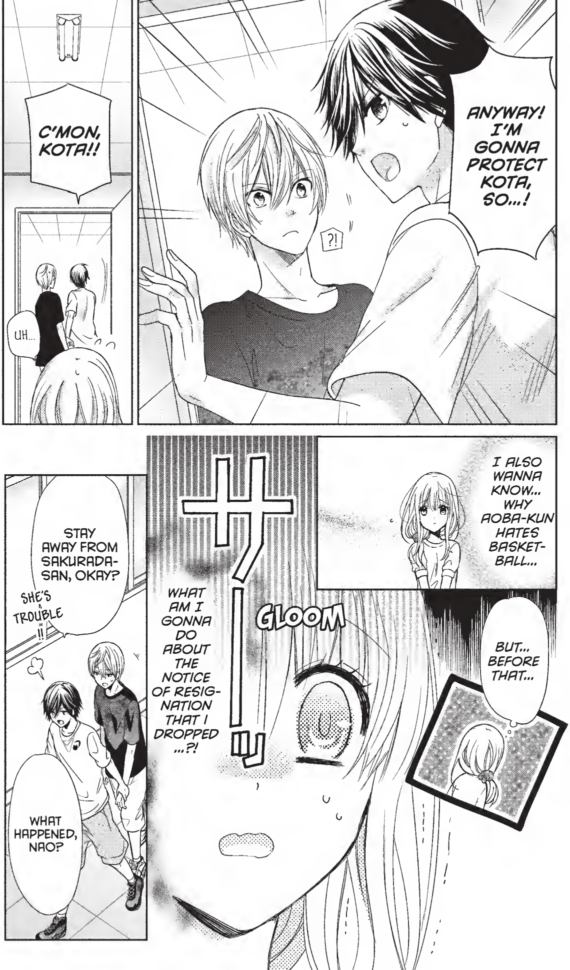

...SAW THAT YOU DROPPED THIS!
退部届
*NOTICE OF RESIGNATION
!!
THE NOTICE OF RESIGNATION THAT I TOOK FROM AOBA-KUN...!
WHY DO YOU HAVE THIS, SAKURADA-SAN?
退部届
WHAT'S GOING ON BETWEEN YOU AND KOTA?
AND IS THIS REAL?

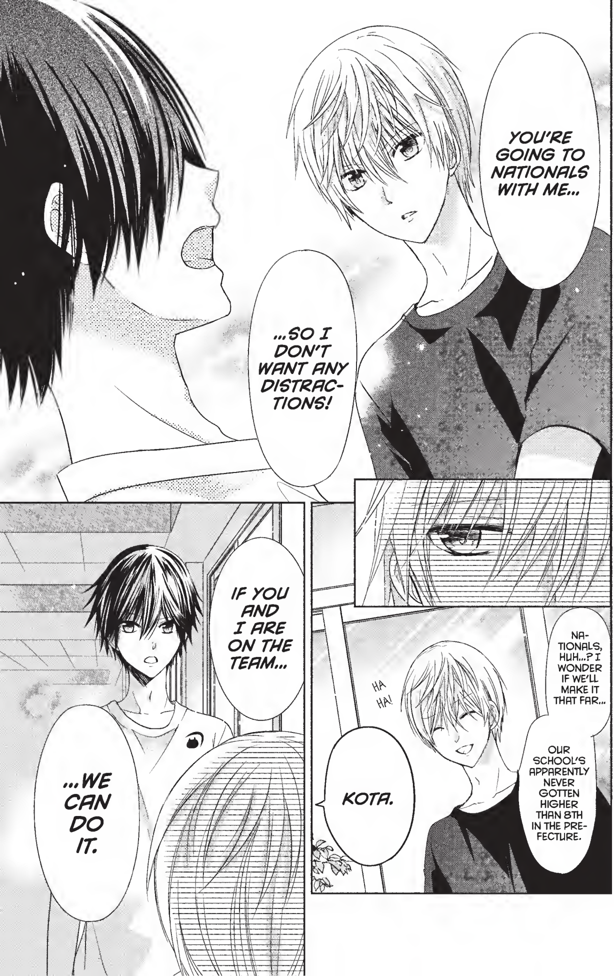

I CAN'T SAY...
I CAN'T LET ANYONE KNOW ABOUT THIS...!
BLOW UP
...
SIGH
AT THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY...
...KOTA WAS THE FIRST PERSON I NOTICED.
IT WAS RARE TO SEE SOMEONE WHO WAS AROUND THE SAME HEIGHT AS ME.
SO, WANTING TO PLAY BASKETBALL WITH HIM, I INVITED HIM TO BE ON THE TEAM...

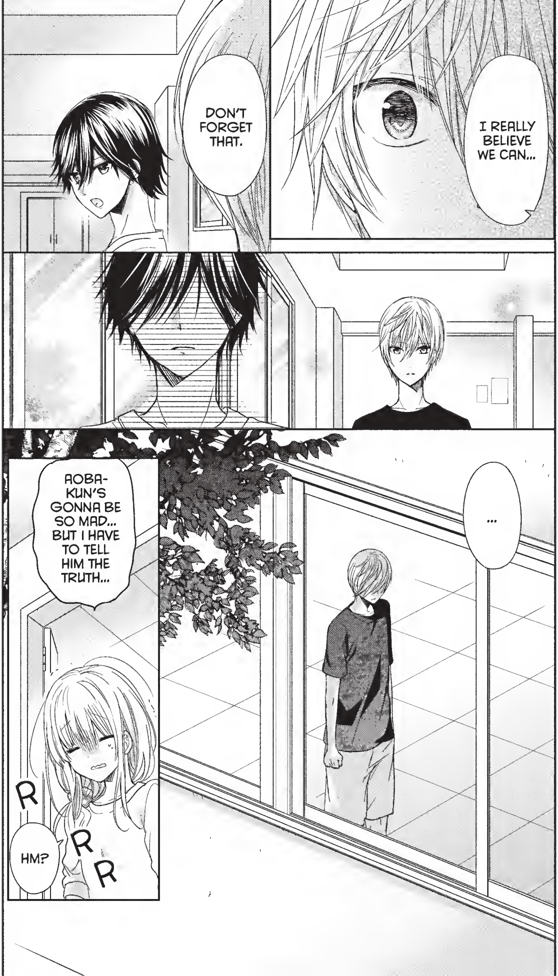

...AND HE SAID, *"I'LL NEVER JOIN THE TEAM."*
HUH ...?
SO I DRAGGED HIM TO PRACTICE AND MADE HIM JOIN THE TEAM.
WHEN WE PLAYED BASKETBALL, HE SEEMED TO ENJOY IT... AND I COULD TELL HE LIKED PLAYING...
SO I THOUGHT WHAT HE SAID WAS A JOKE AND DIDN'T THINK MUCH OF IT...

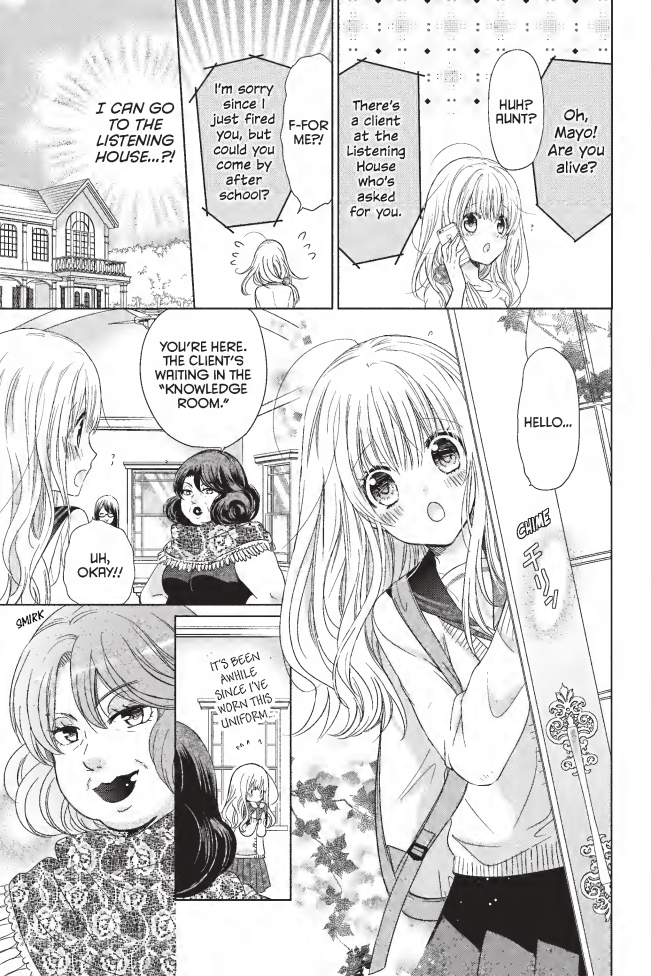

BUT SEEING THE NOTICE OF RESIGNATION...
...I'M STARTING TO THINK HE MIGHT REALLY HATE THE BASKETBALL TEAM.
HE'S REALLY... CONCERNED ABOUT AOBA-KUN...
BUT IF THAT'S TRUE, I WANT TO KNOW WHY...
I WANT TO SOLVE THAT, AND AIM FOR NATIONALS.
HE'S DESPERATELY TRYING TO GAIN HIS TRUST...!

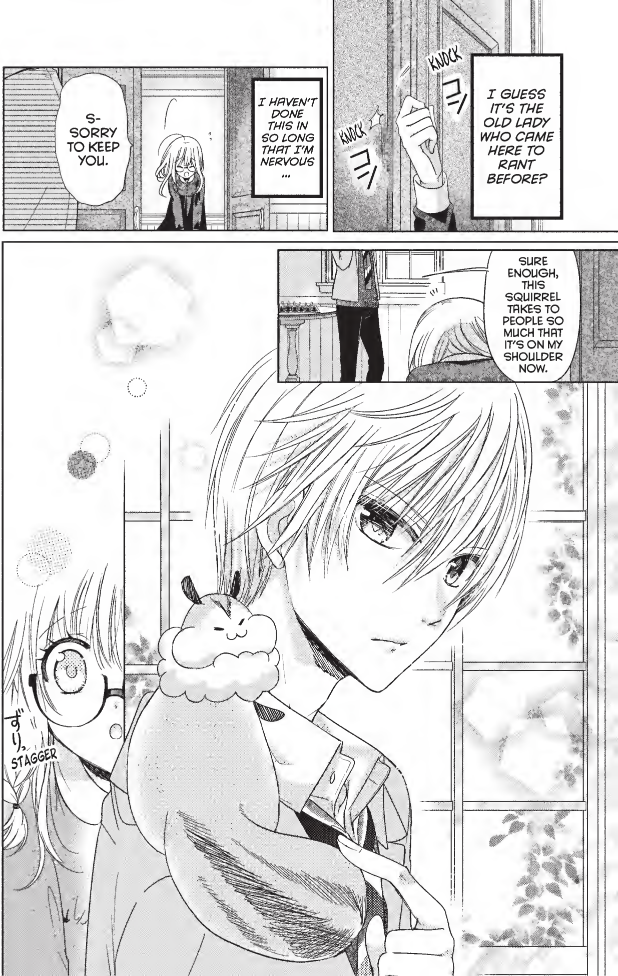

SO IF YOU'RE TRYING SOMETHING FUNNY WITH KOTA, I SWEAR...
I'M GLAD ...!
WHY ARE YOU SMILING WHEN SOMEONE'S PRESSING YOU FOR ANSWERS?!
I DON'T GET IT!!
GASP
NAO?

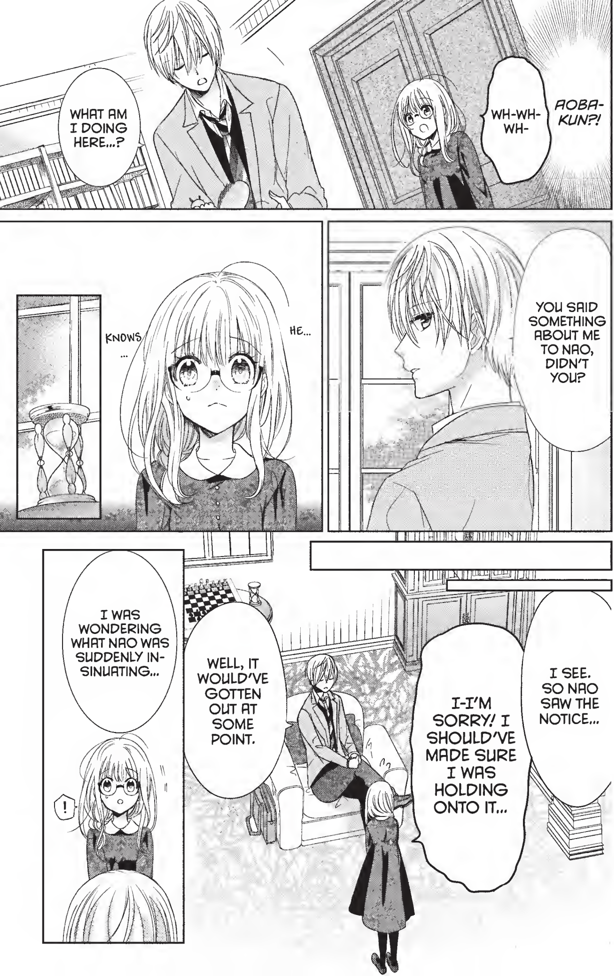

ANYWAY! I'M GONNA PROTECT KOTA, SO...!
?!
C'MON, KOTA!!
UH...
I ALSO WANNA KNOW... WHY AOBA-KUN HATES BASKETBALL...
BUT... BEFORE THAT...
サーッ
GLOOM
WHAT AM I GONNA DO ABOUT THE NOTICE OF RESIGNATION THAT I DROPPED...?!
STAY AWAY FROM SAKURADA-SAN, OKAY?
SHE'S TROUBLE!!
WHAT HAPPENED, NAO?

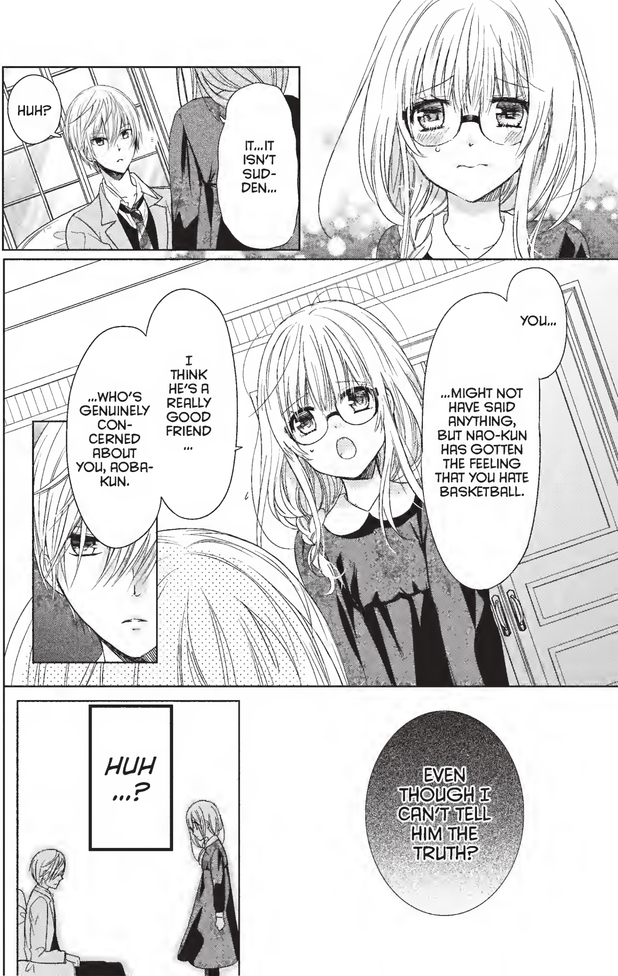

YOU'RE GOING TO NATIONALS WITH ME...
...SO I DON'T WANT ANY DISTRACTIONS!
NATIONALS, HUH...? I WONDER IF WE'LL MAKE IT THAT FAR...
HA HA!
OUR SCHOOL'S APPARENTLY NEVER GOTTEN HIGHER THAN 8TH IN THE PREFECTURE.
KOTA.
IF YOU AND I ARE ON THE TEAM...
...WE CAN DO IT.

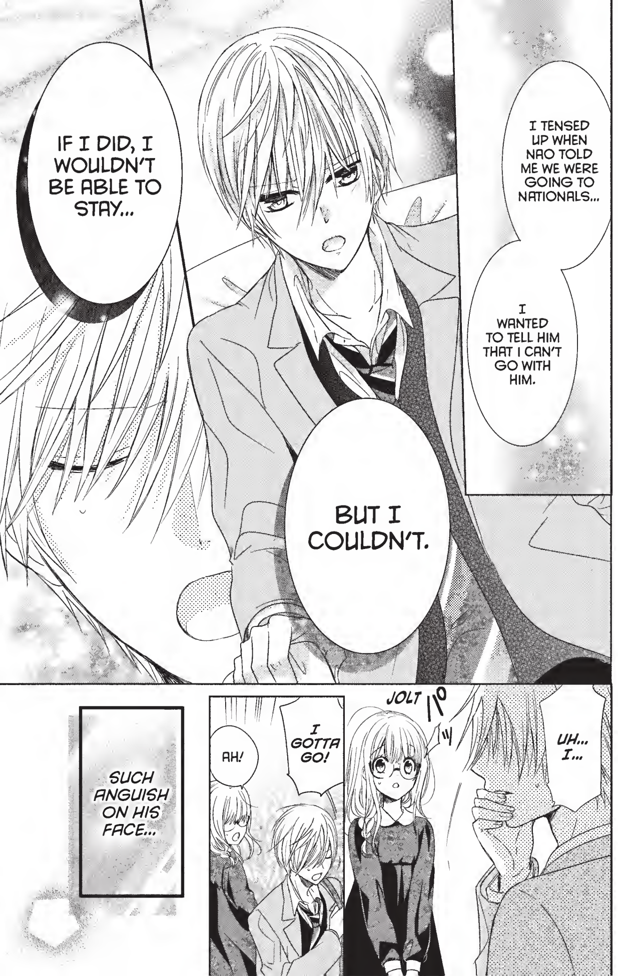

I REALLY BELIEVE WE CAN...
DON'T FORGET THAT.
...
AOBA-KUN'S GONNA BE SO MAD... BUT I HAVE TO TELL HIM THE TRUTH...
R R R
HM?

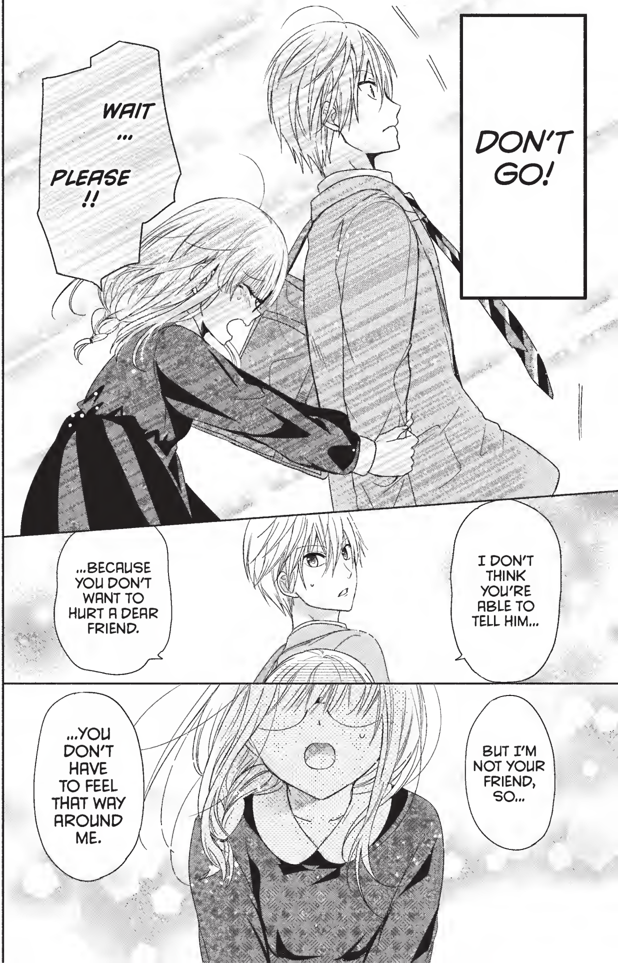

Oh, Mayo! Are you alive?
HUH? AUNT?
There's a client at the Listening House who's asked for you.
F-FOR ME?!
I'm sorry since I just fired you, but could you come by after school?
I CAN GO TO THE LISTENING HOUSE...?!
HELLO...
CHIME
チリン
YOU'RE HERE. THE CLIENT'S WAITING IN THE "KNOWLEDGE ROOM."
UH, OKAY!!
IT'S BEEN AWHILE SINCE I'VE WORN THIS UNIFORM...
SMIRK

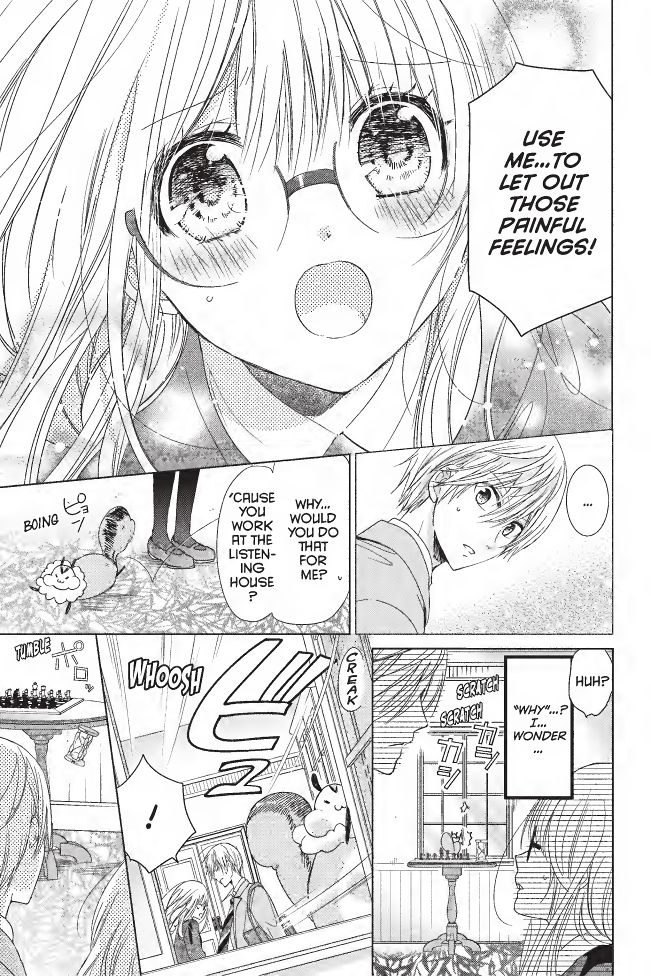

KNOCK
コン
KNOCK
コン
I GUESS IT'S THE OLD LADY WHO CAME HERE TO RANT BEFORE?
I HAVEN'T DONE THIS IN SO LONG THAT I'M NERVOUS...
S-SORRY TO KEEP YOU.
SURE ENOUGH, THIS SQUIRREL TAKES TO PEOPLE SO MUCH THAT IT'S ON MY SHOULDER NOW.
ずりっ
STAGGER

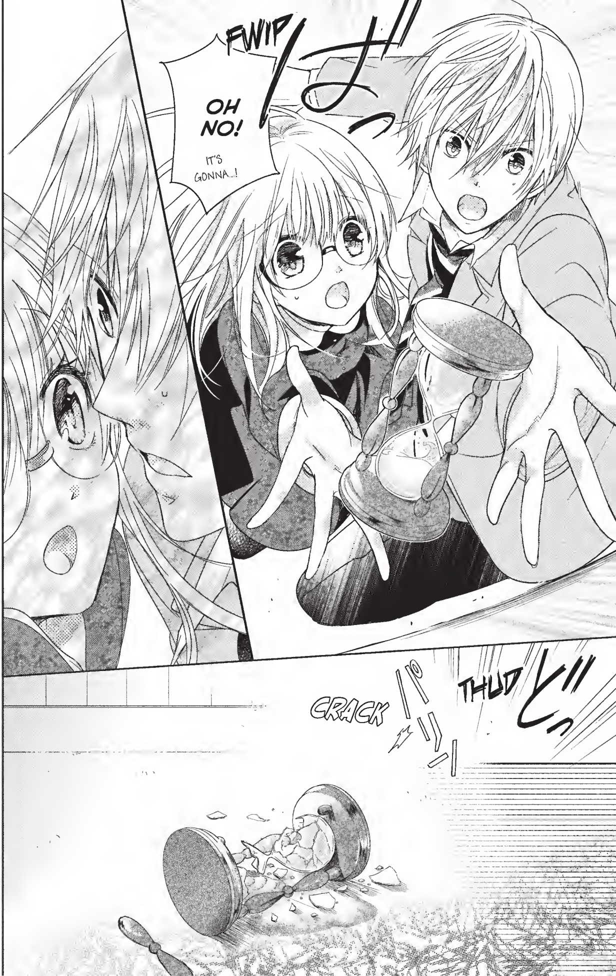

AOBA-KUN?!
WH-WH-WH-
WHAT AM I DOING HERE...?
YOU SAID SOMETHING ABOUT ME TO NAO, DIDN'T YOU?
HE...
KNOWS...
I SEE. SO NAO SAW THE NOTICE...
I-I'M SORRY! I SHOULD'VE MADE SURE I WAS HOLDING ONTO IT...
WELL, IT WOULD'VE GOTTEN OUT AT SOME POINT.
I WAS WONDERING WHAT NAO WAS SUDDENLY INSINUATING...
!

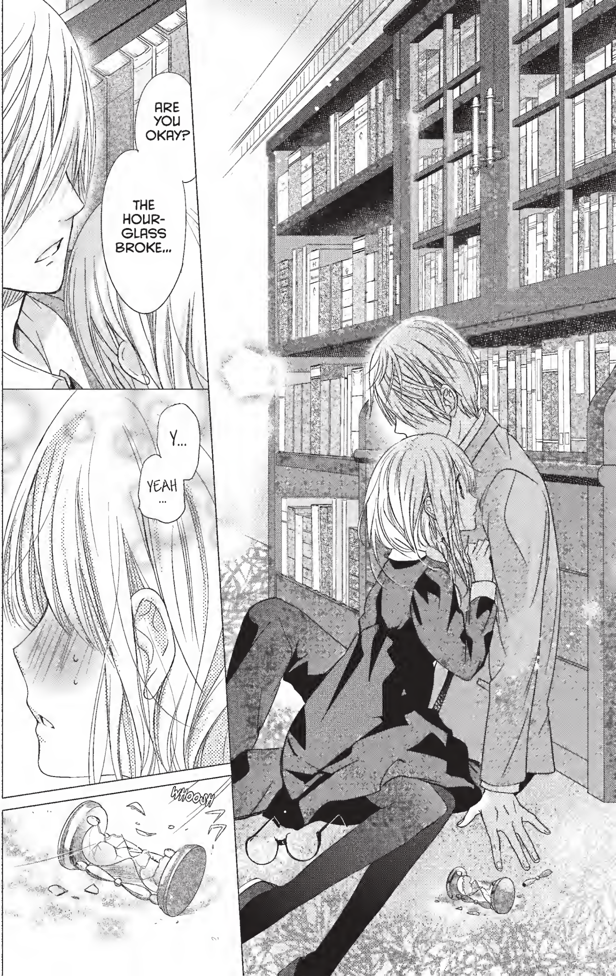

IT...IT ISN'T SUDDEN...
HUH?
YOU...
...MIGHT NOT HAVE SAID ANYTHING, BUT NAO-KUN HAS GOTTEN THE FEELING THAT YOU HATE BASKETBALL.
I THINK HE'S A REALLY GOOD FRIEND...
...WHO'S GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT YOU, AOBA-KUN.
EVEN THOUGH I CAN'T TELL HIM THE TRUTH?
HUH...?

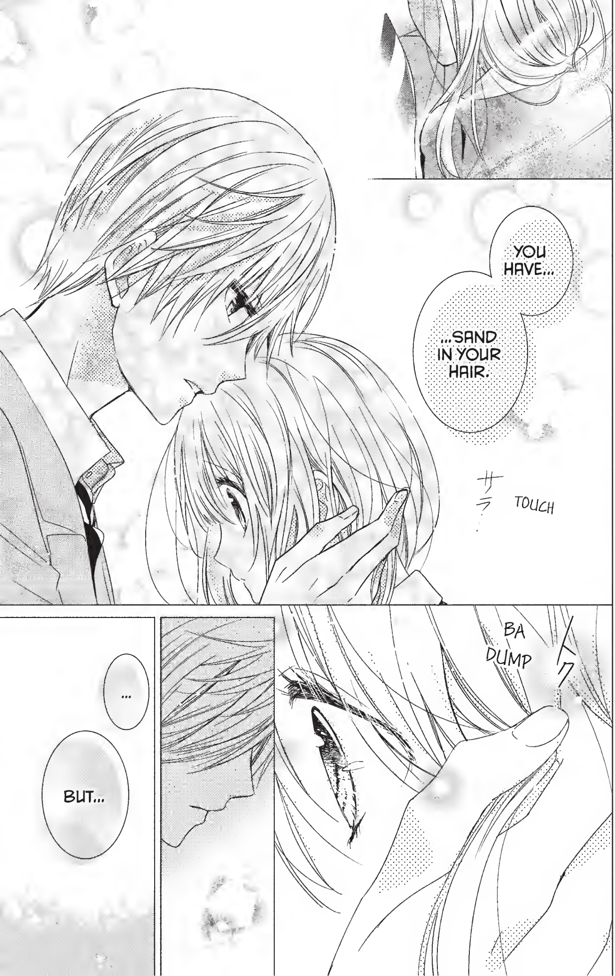

I TENSED UP WHEN NAO TOLD ME WE WERE GOING TO NATIONALS...
I WANTED TO TELL HIM THAT I CAN'T GO WITH HIM.
BUT I COULDN'T.
IF I DID, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO STAY...
UH... I...
JOLT
I GOTTA GO!
AH!
SUCH ANGUISH ON HIS FACE...

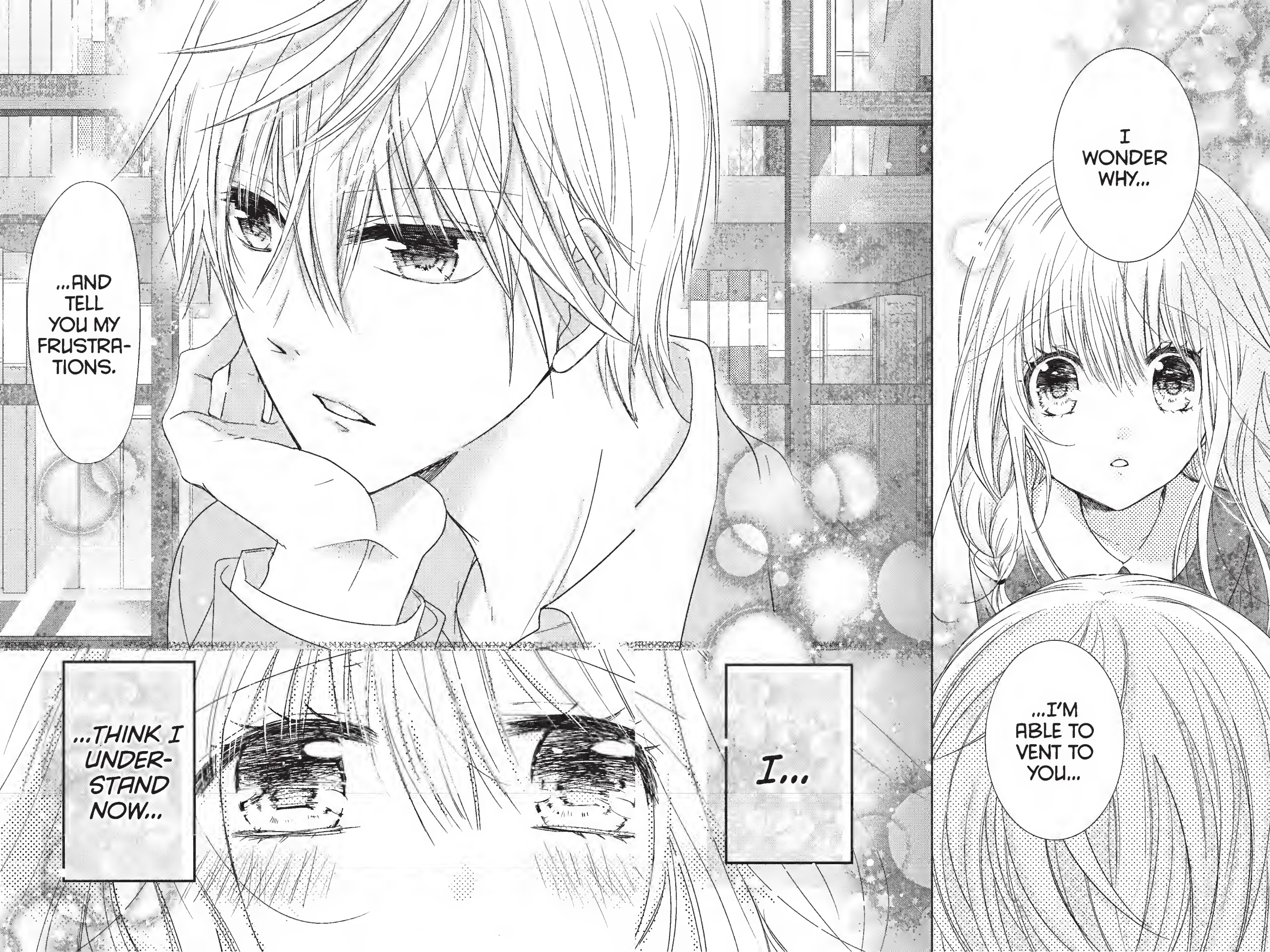

DON'T GO!
WAIT ... PLEASE !!
I DON'T THINK YOU'RE ABLE TO TELL HIM...
...BECAUSE YOU DON'T WANT TO HURT A DEAR FRIEND.
BUT I'M NOT YOUR FRIEND, SO...
...YOU DON'T HAVE TO FEEL THAT WAY AROUND ME.

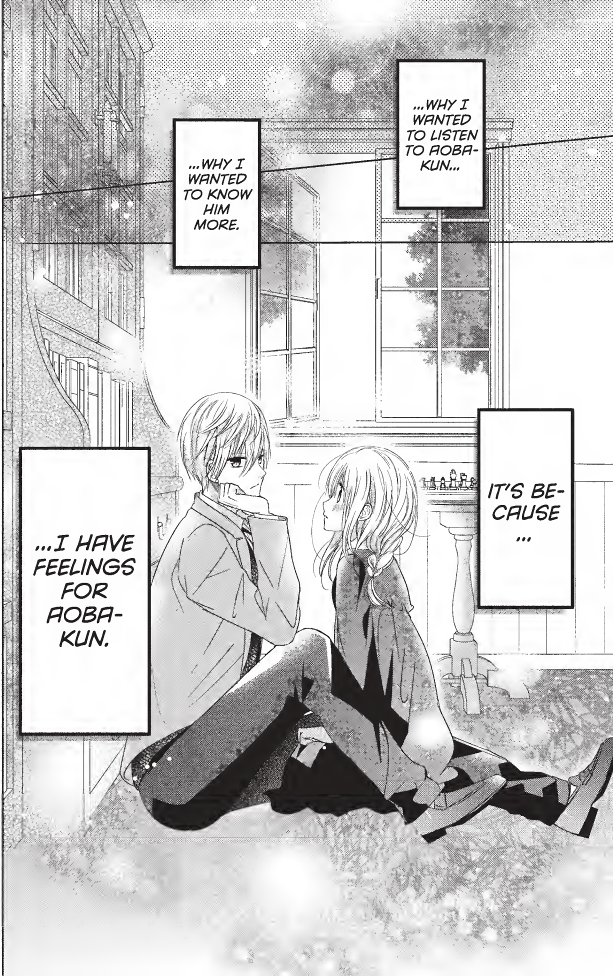

USE ME...TO LET OUT THOSE PAINFUL FEELINGS!
...
WHY... WOULD YOU DO THAT FOR ME?
'CAUSE YOU WORK AT THE LISTENING HOUSE?
BOING ピョン
HUH?
"WHY"...? I... WONDER ...
SCRATCH SCRATCH カシ カシ
CREAK
WHOOSH ビュ
!
TUMBLE ポロッ


FWIP
ばっ
OH NO!
IT'S GONNA..!
THUD
どっ
CRACK
パリン


ARE YOU OKAY?
THE HOURGLASS BROKE...
Y...
YEAH...
WHOOSH

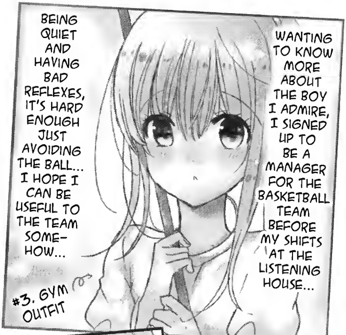

YOU HAVE...
...SAND IN YOUR HAIR.
サラ
TOUCH
トク
BA DUMP
...
BUT...

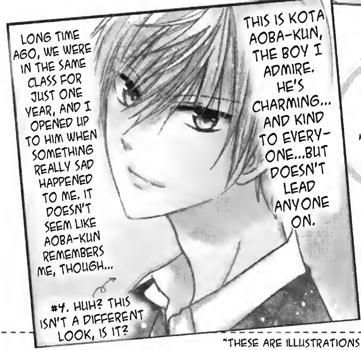

I WONDER WHY...
...I'M ABLE TO VENT TO YOU...
...AND TELL YOU MY FRUSTRATIONS.
I...
...THINK I UNDERSTAND NOW...


...WHY I WANTED TO LISTEN TO AOBA-KUN...
...WHY I WANTED TO KNOW HIM MORE.
IT'S BECAUSE ...
...I HAVE FEELINGS FOR AOBA-KUN.

AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

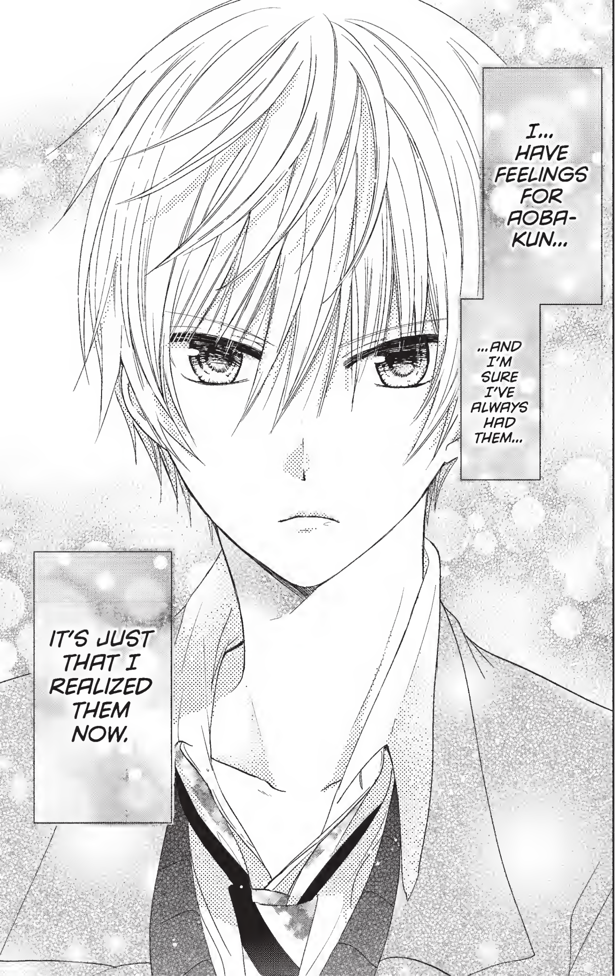
Time.7
I LIKE EVERYONE

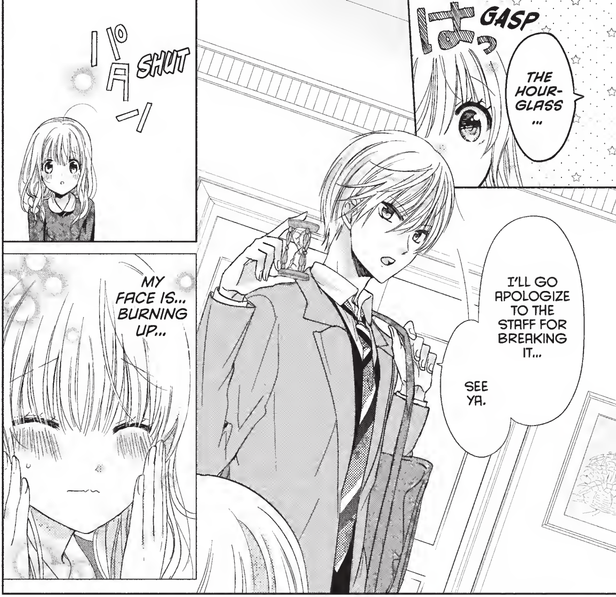

WANTING TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE BOY I ADMIRE, I SIGNED UP TO BE A MANAGER FOR THE BASKETBALL TEAM BEFORE MY SHIFTS AT THE LISTENING HOUSE...
BEING QUIET AND HAVING BAD REFLEXES, IT'S HARD ENOUGH JUST AVOIDING THE BALL... I HOPE I CAN BE USEFUL TO THE TEAM SOMEHOW...
#3. GYM OUTFIT


THIS IS KOTA AOBA-KUN, THE BOY I ADMIRE. HE'S CHARMING... AND KIND TO EVERYONE...BUT DOESN'T LEAD ANYONE ON.
LONG TIME AGO, WE WERE IN THE SAME CLASS FOR JUST ONE YEAR, AND I OPENED UP TO HIM WHEN SOMETHING REALLY SAD HAPPENED TO ME. IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE AOBA-KUN REMEMBERS ME, THOUGH...
#4. HUH? THIS ISN'T A DIFFERENT LOOK, IS IT?

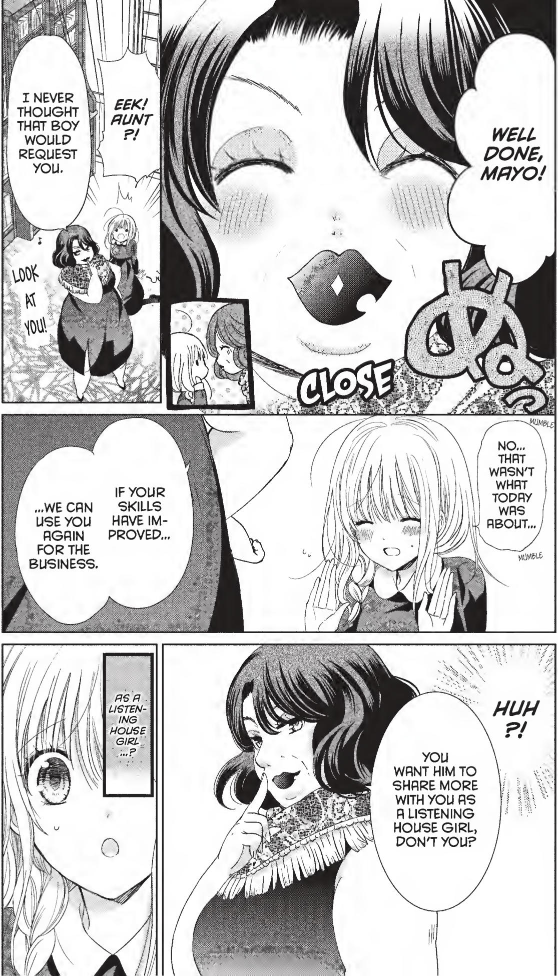
AOBAKUN
NI
KIKITAI
KOTO

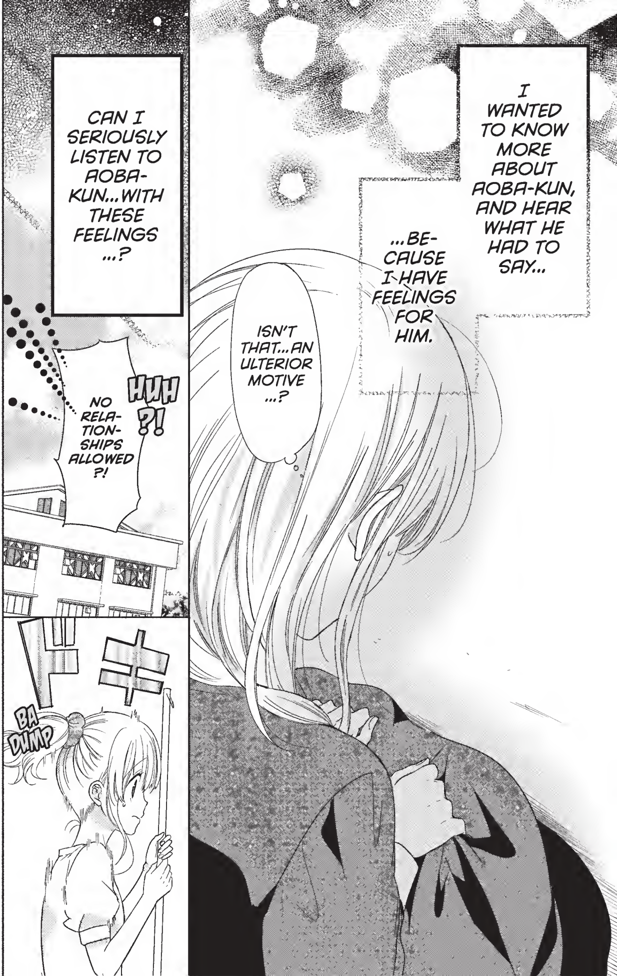
*THESE ARE ILLUSTRATIONS THAT WERE PUBLISHED ON TWITTER WHEN THE FIRST VOLUME WAS BEING RELEASED.

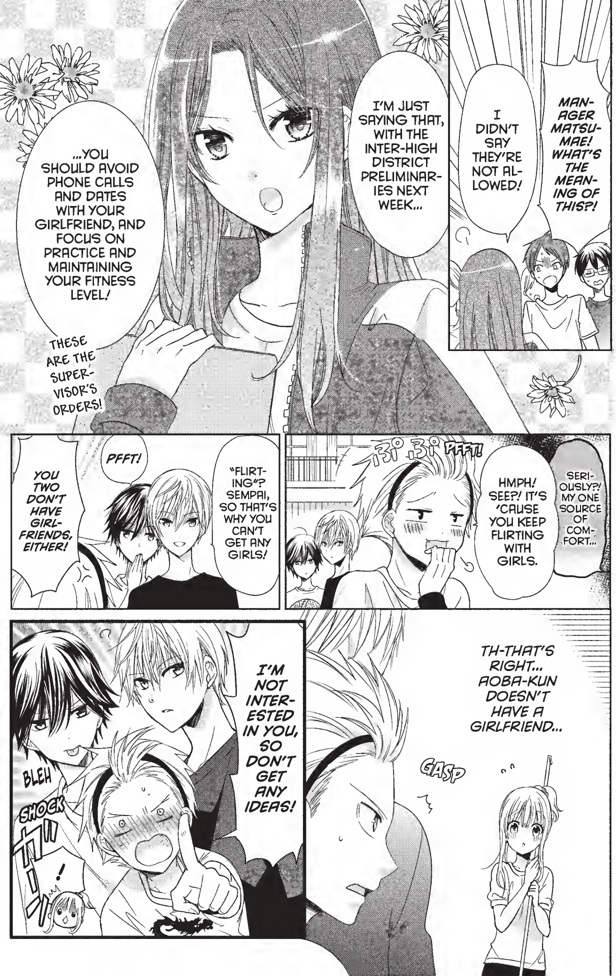

I... HAVE FEELINGS FOR AOBA-KUN...
...AND I'M SURE I'VE ALWAYS HAD THEM...
IT'S JUST THAT I REALIZED THEM NOW.

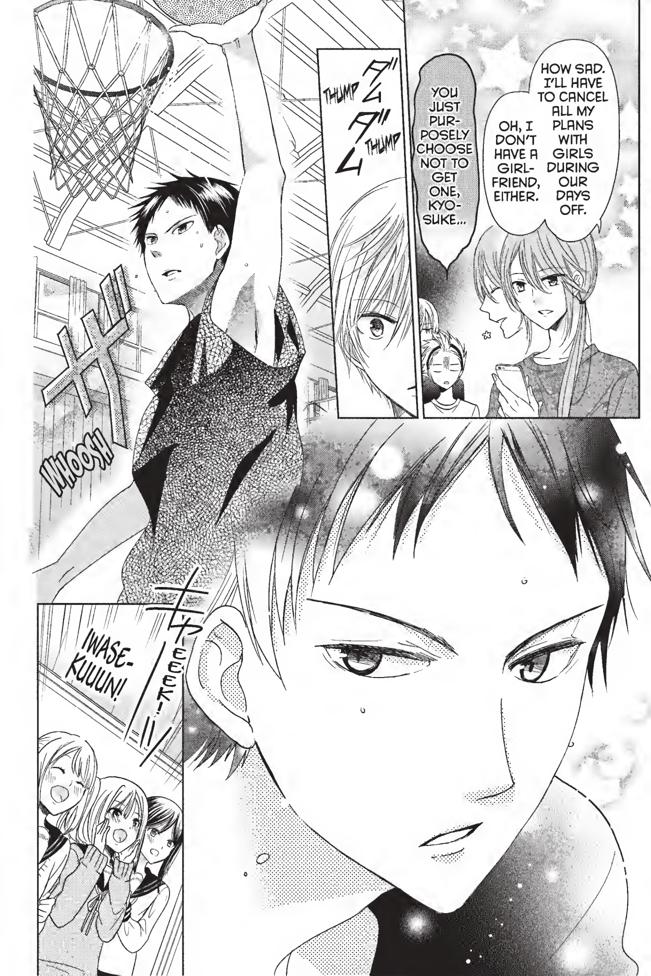

はっ GASP
THE HOURGLASS ...
I'LL GO APOLOGIZE TO THE STAFF FOR BREAKING IT...
SEE YA.
パタン SHUT
MY FACE IS... BURNING UP...

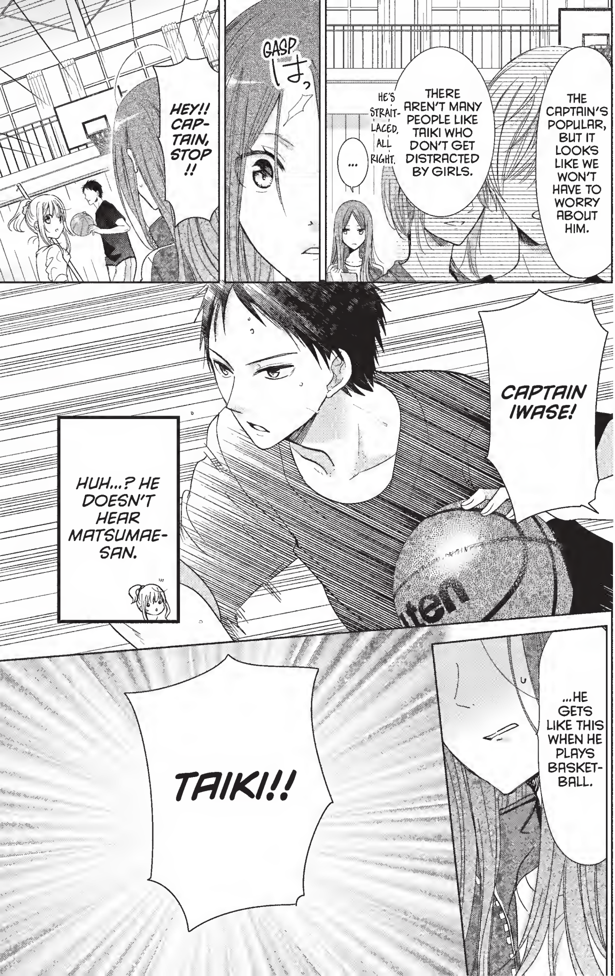
AOBA-KUN'S
CONFESSIONS

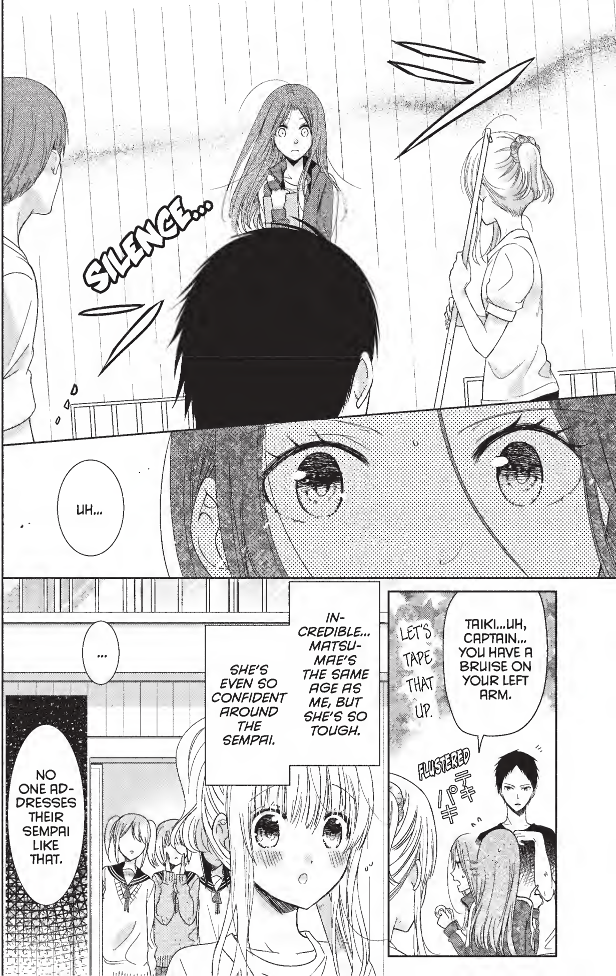

WELL DONE, MAYO!
めっ
CLOSE
EEK! AUNT?!
I NEVER THOUGHT THAT BOY WOULD REQUEST YOU.
LOOK AT YOU!
MUMBLE
NO... THAT WASN'T WHAT TODAY WAS ABOUT...
MUMBLE
IF YOUR SKILLS HAVE IMPROVED...
...WE CAN USE YOU AGAIN FOR THE BUSINESS.
HUH?!
YOU WANT HIM TO SHARE MORE WITH YOU AS A LISTENING HOUSE GIRL, DON'T YOU?
AS A LISTENING HOUSE GIRL...?


I WANTED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT AOBA-KUN, AND HEAR WHAT HE HAD TO SAY...
...BECAUSE I HAVE FEELINGS FOR HIM.
ISN'T THAT...AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE...?
CAN I SERIOUSLY LISTEN TO AOBA-KUN...WITH THESE FEELINGS...?
HUH?!
NO RELATIONSHIPS ALLOWED?!
ドキ
BA DUMP


MANAGER MATSUMAE! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?!
I DIDN'T SAY THEY'RE NOT ALLOWED!
I'M JUST SAYING THAT, WITH THE INTER-HIGH DISTRICT PRELIMINARIES NEXT WEEK...
...YOU SHOULD AVOID PHONE CALLS AND DATES WITH YOUR GIRLFRIEND, AND FOCUS ON PRACTICE AND MAINTAINING YOUR FITNESS LEVEL!
THESE ARE THE SUPERVISOR'S ORDERS!
SERIOUSLY?! MY ONE SOURCE OF COMFORT...
PFFT!
HMPH! SEE?! IT'S 'CAUSE YOU KEEP FLIRTING WITH GIRLS.
"FLIRTING"? SEMPAI, SO THAT'S WHY YOU CAN'T GET ANY GIRLS!
PFFT!
YOU TWO DON'T HAVE GIRLFRIENDS, EITHER!
TH-THAT'S RIGHT... AOBA-KUN DOESN'T HAVE A GIRLFRIEND...
GASP
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOU, SO DON'T GET ANY IDEAS!
BLEH
SHOCK


HOW SAD. I'LL HAVE TO CANCEL ALL MY PLANS WITH GIRLS DURING OUR DAYS OFF.
OH, I DON'T HAVE A GIRLFRIEND, EITHER.
YOU JUST PURPOSELY CHOOSE NOT TO GET ONE, KYOSUKE...
ダム THUMP
ダム THUMP
WHOOSH
キャ EEEK!!
IWASE-KUUUN!

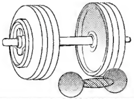

THE CAPTAIN'S POPULAR, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HIM.
THERE AREN'T MANY PEOPLE LIKE TAIKI WHO DON'T GET DISTRACTED BY GIRLS.
HE'S STRAITLACED, ALL RIGHT.
...
GASP はっ
HEY!! CAPTAIN, STOP!!
CAPTAIN IWASE!
HUH...? HE DOESN'T HEAR MATSUMAE-SAN.
...HE GETS LIKE THIS WHEN HE PLAYS BASKETBALL.
TAIKI!!

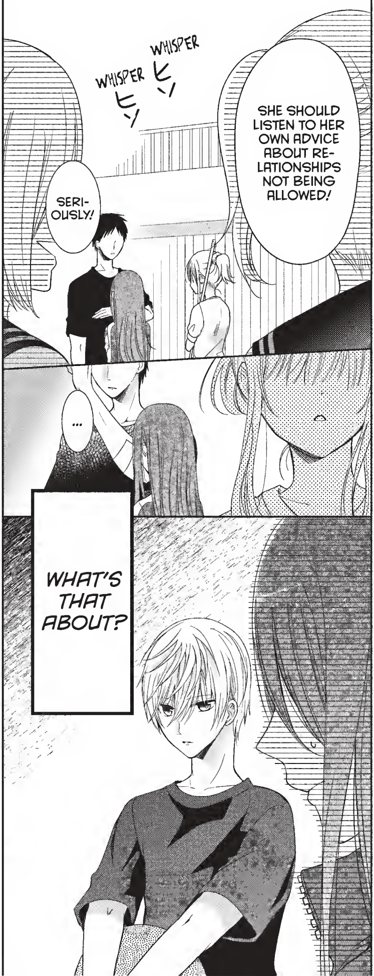

SILENCE...
UH...
TAIKI...UH, CAPTAIN... YOU HAVE A BRUISE ON YOUR LEFT ARM.
LET'S TAPE THAT UP.
FLUSTERED
テキパキ
INCREDIBLE... MATSUMAE'S THE SAME AGE AS ME, BUT SHE'S SO TOUGH.
SHE'S EVEN SO CONFIDENT AROUND THE SEMPAI.
...
NO ONE ADDRESSES THEIR SEMPAI LIKE THAT.

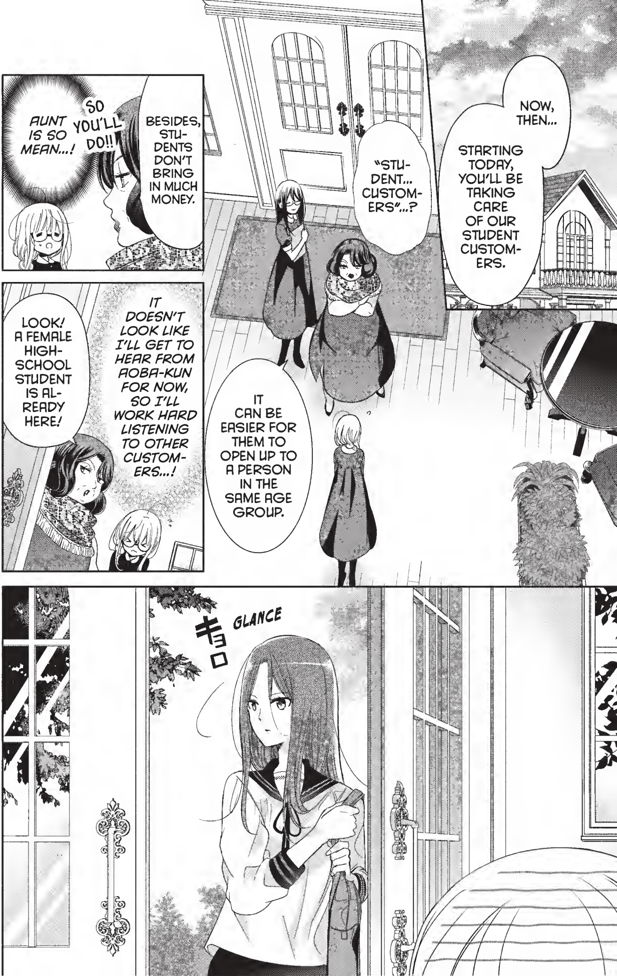
TAIKI IWASE
BORN JANUARY 1ST
BLOOD TYPE: A
HEIGHT: 192CM
FAVORITE FOOD:
UNA-JUU (BROILED EEL AND RICE SERVED IN SEPARATE STACKED BOXES)
YAKINIKU (GRILLED MEAT)

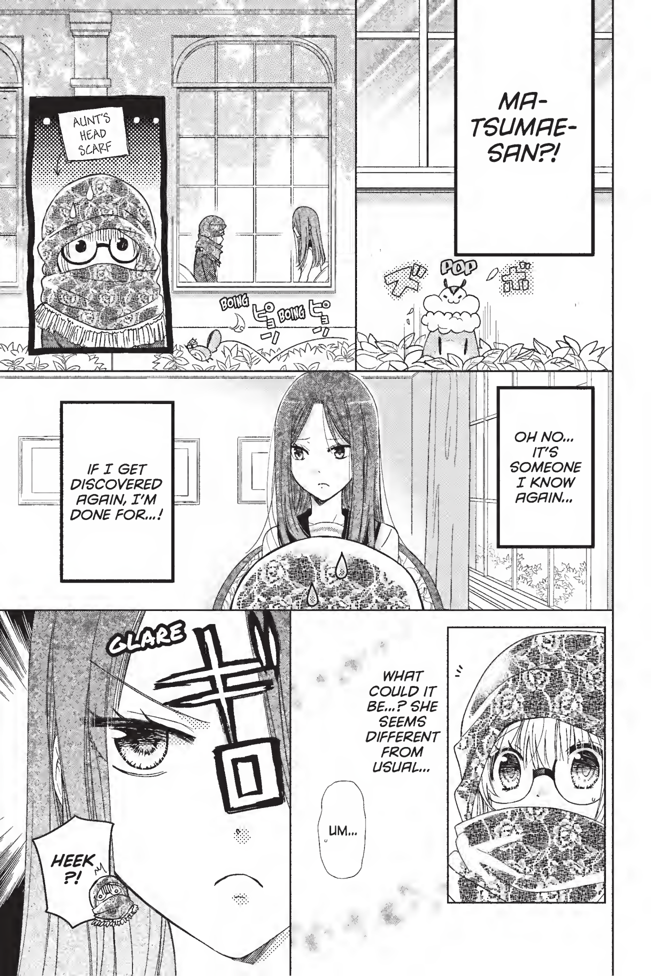
6:30AM
WEIGHT TRAINING AT A PARK IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

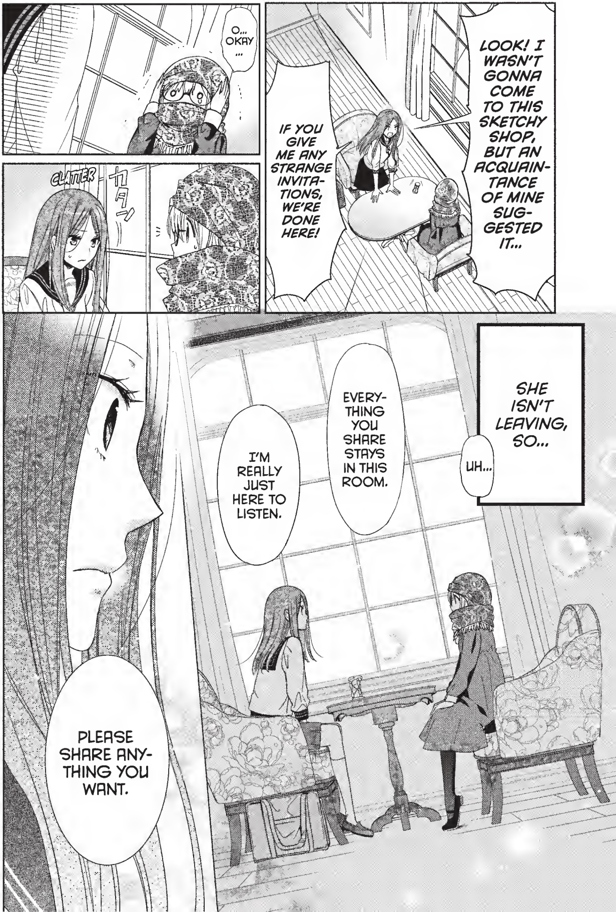
HE LIKES TO COLLECT DUMBBELLS

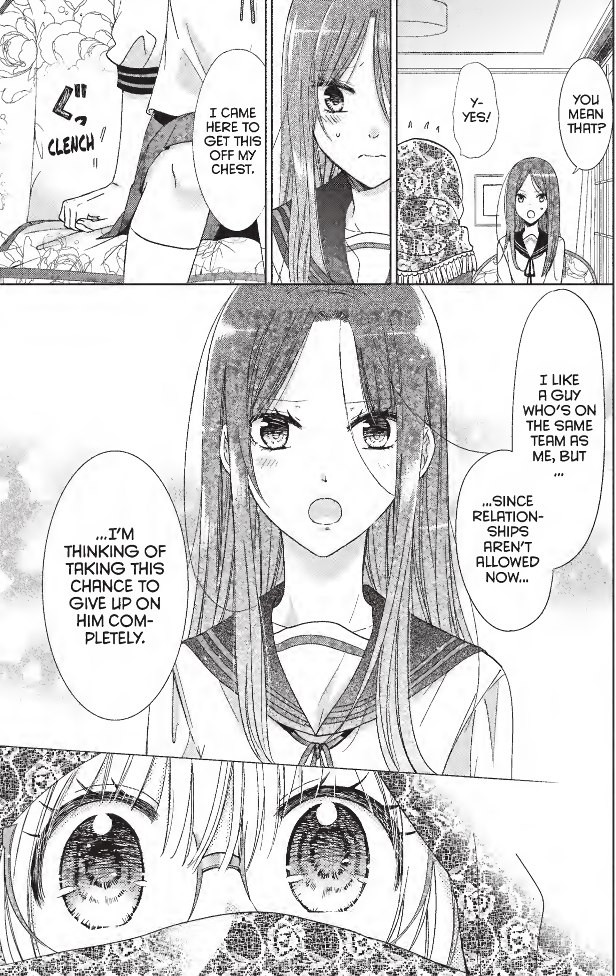


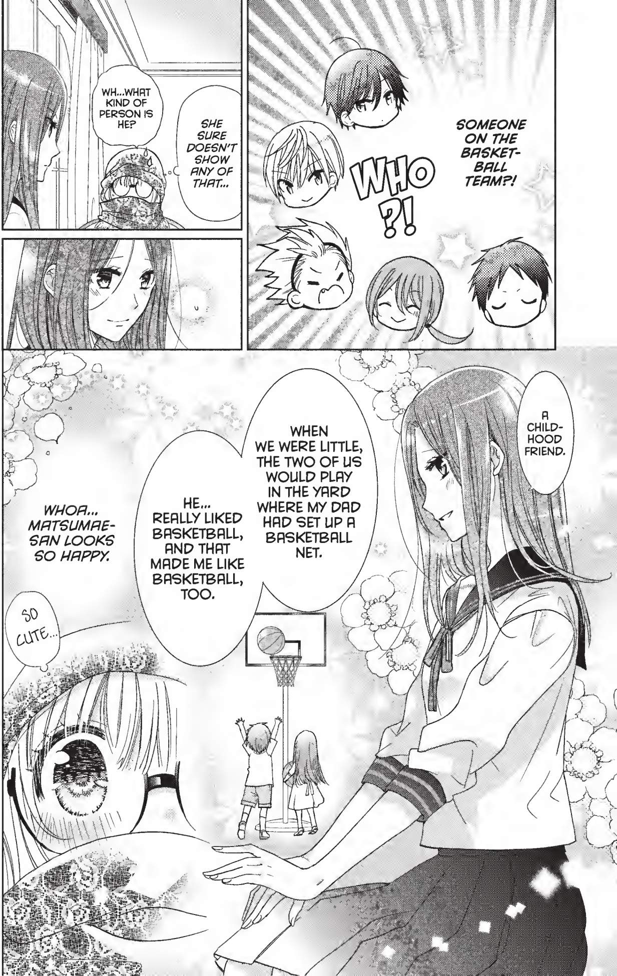

SHE SHOULD LISTEN TO HER OWN ADVICE ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS NOT BEING ALLOWED!
WHISPER ヒソ
WHISPER ヒソ
SERIOUSLY!
...
WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

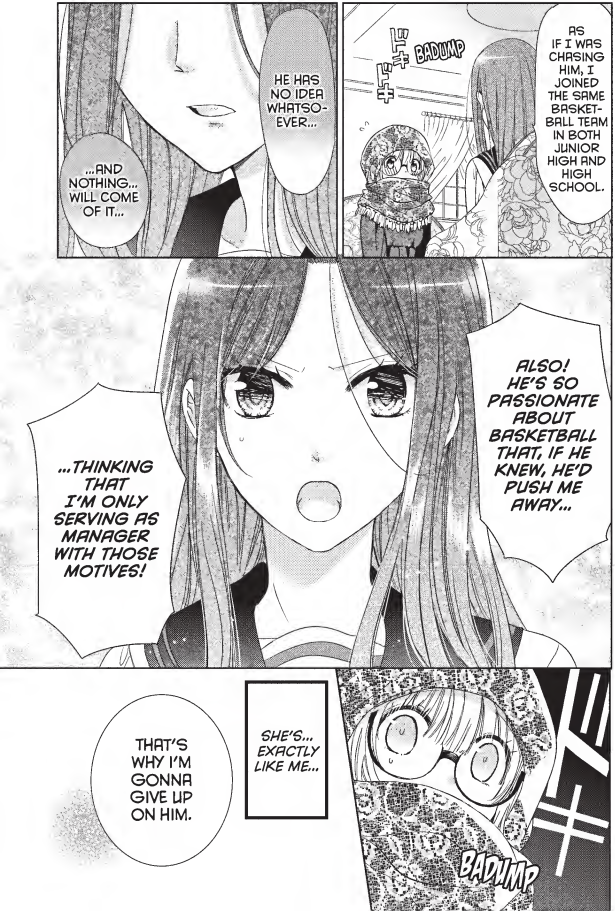

NOW, THEN...
STARTING TODAY, YOU'LL BE TAKING CARE OF OUR STUDENT CUSTOMERS.
"STUDENT... CUSTOMERS"...?
BESIDES, STUDENTS DON'T BRING IN MUCH MONEY.
SO YOU'LL DO!!
AUNT IS SO MEAN...!
IT CAN BE EASIER FOR THEM TO OPEN UP TO A PERSON IN THE SAME AGE GROUP.
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE I'LL GET TO HEAR FROM AOBA-KUN FOR NOW, SO I'LL WORK HARD LISTENING TO OTHER CUSTOMERS...!
LOOK! A FEMALE HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENT IS ALREADY HERE!
キョロ
GLANCE

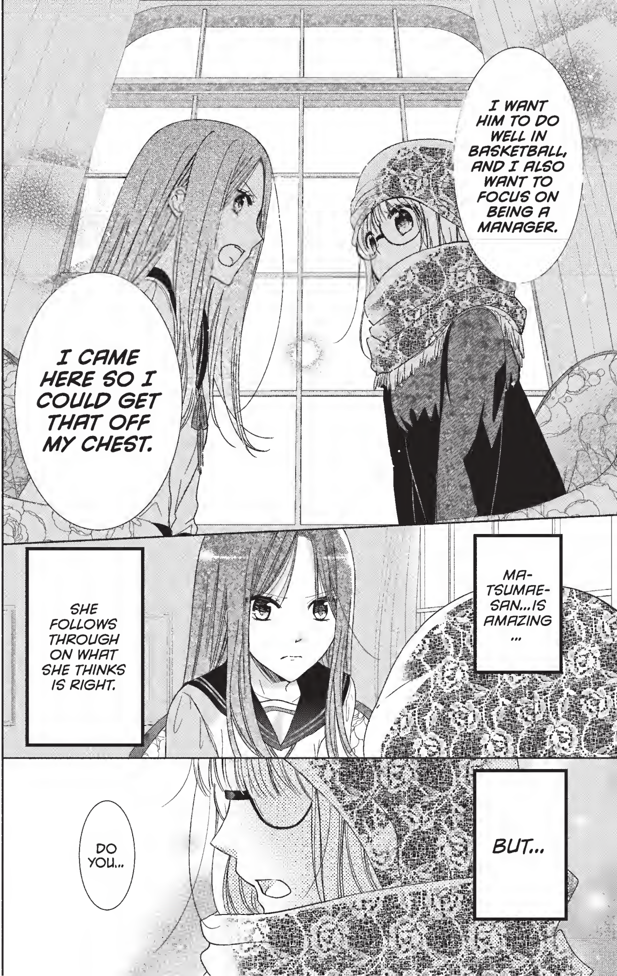

MA-TSUMAE-SAN?!
POP
AUNT'S HEAD SCARF
BOING
ピョーン
BOING
ピョーン
OH NO... IT'S SOMEONE I KNOW AGAIN...
IF I GET DISCOVERED AGAIN, I'M DONE FOR...!
WHAT COULD IT BE...? SHE SEEMS DIFFERENT FROM USUAL...
UM...
GLARE
ギロ
HEEK?!

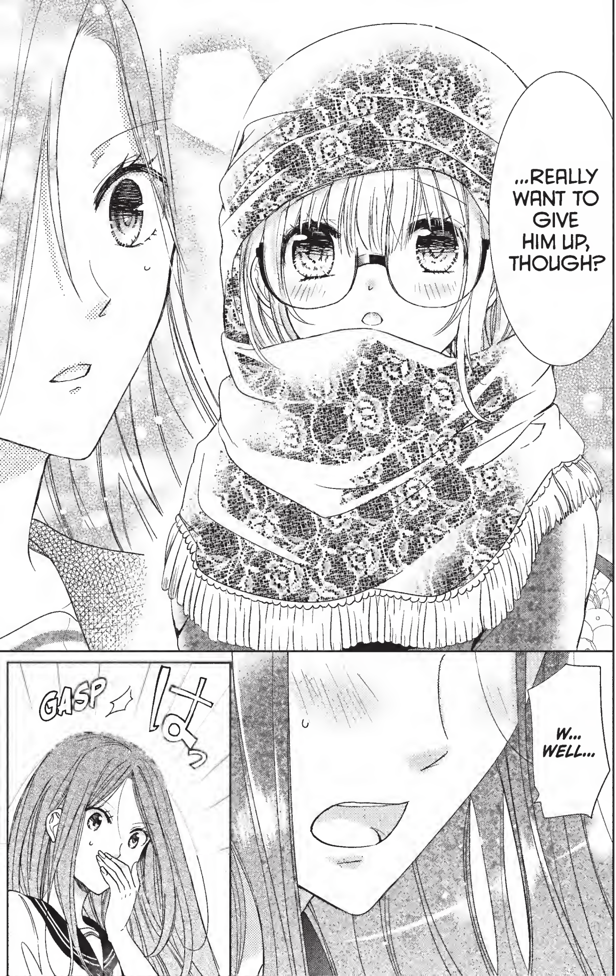

LOOK! I WASN'T GONNA COME TO THIS SKETCHY SHOP, BUT AN ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE SUGGESTED IT...
IF YOU GIVE ME ANY STRANGE INVITATIONS, WE'RE DONE HERE!
O... OKAY...
CLATTER
カタン
SHE ISN'T LEAVING, SO...
UH...
EVERYTHING YOU SHARE STAYS IN THIS ROOM.
I'M REALLY JUST HERE TO LISTEN.
PLEASE SHARE ANYTHING YOU WANT.

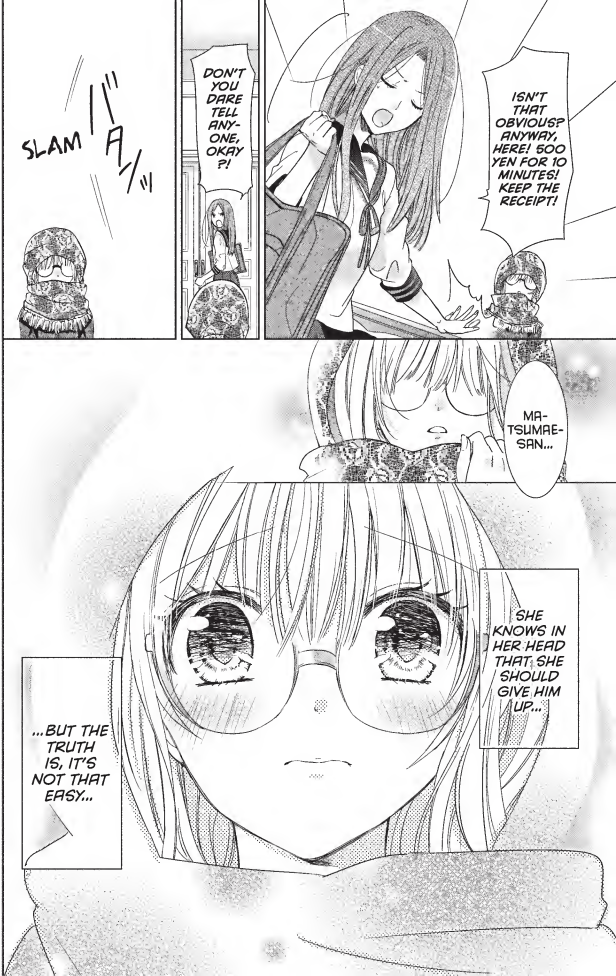

YOU MEAN THAT?
Y-YES!
I CAME HERE TO GET THIS OFF MY CHEST.
ぐっ
CLENCH
I LIKE A GUY WHO'S ON THE SAME TEAM AS ME, BUT ...
...SINCE RELATIONSHIPS AREN'T ALLOWED NOW...
...I'M THINKING OF TAKING THIS CHANCE TO GIVE UP ON HIM COMPLETELY.

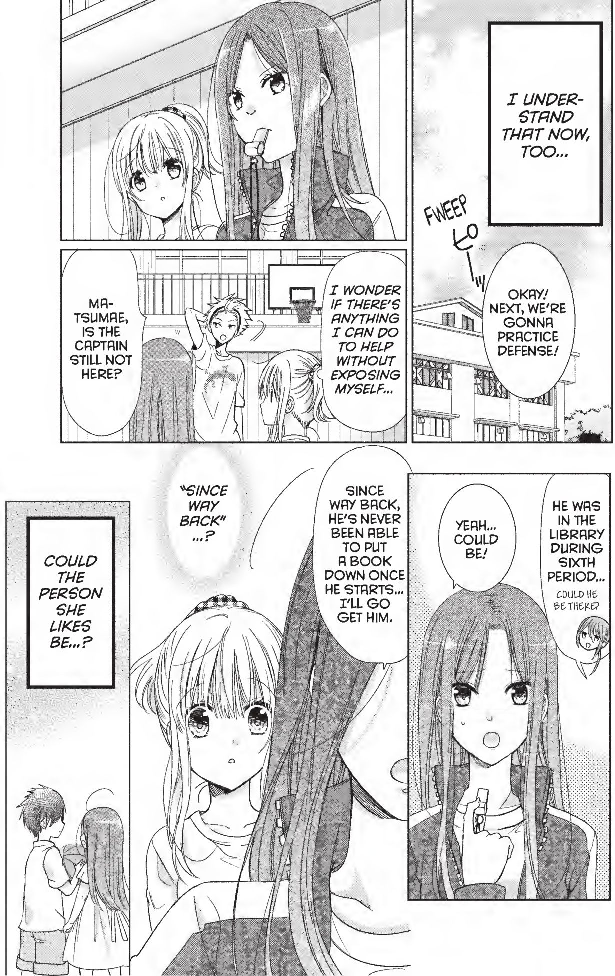

SOMEONE ON THE BASKETBALL TEAM?!
WHO?!
SHE SURE DOESN'T SHOW ANY OF THAT...
WH...WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE?
A CHILDHOOD FRIEND.
WHEN WE WERE LITTLE, THE TWO OF US WOULD PLAY IN THE YARD WHERE MY DAD HAD SET UP A BASKETBALL NET.
HE... REALLY LIKED BASKETBALL, AND THAT MADE ME LIKE BASKETBALL, TOO.
WHOA... MATSUMAE-SAN LOOKS SO HAPPY.
SO CUTE...

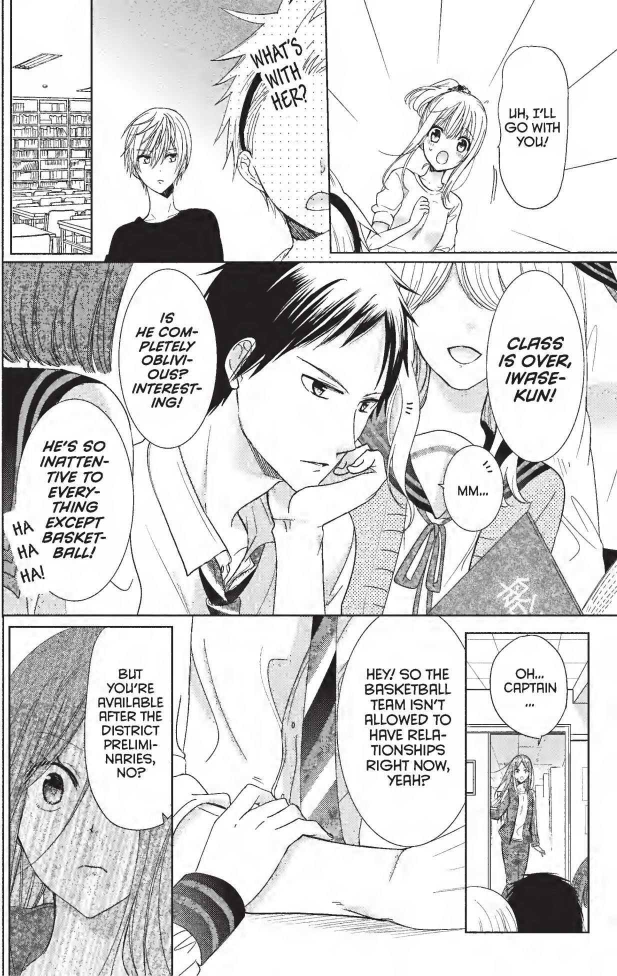

ドキ ドキ
BADUMP
AS IF I WAS CHASING HIM, I JOINED THE SAME BASKETBALL TEAM IN BOTH JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL.
HE HAS NO IDEA WHATSOEVER...
...AND NOTHING... WILL COME OF IT...
ALSO! HE'S SO PASSIONATE ABOUT BASKETBALL THAT, IF HE KNEW, HE'D PUSH ME AWAY...
...THINKING THAT I'M ONLY SERVING AS MANAGER WITH THOSE MOTIVES!
ドキ
BADUMP
SHE'S... EXACTLY LIKE ME...
THAT'S WHY I'M GONNA GIVE UP ON HIM.

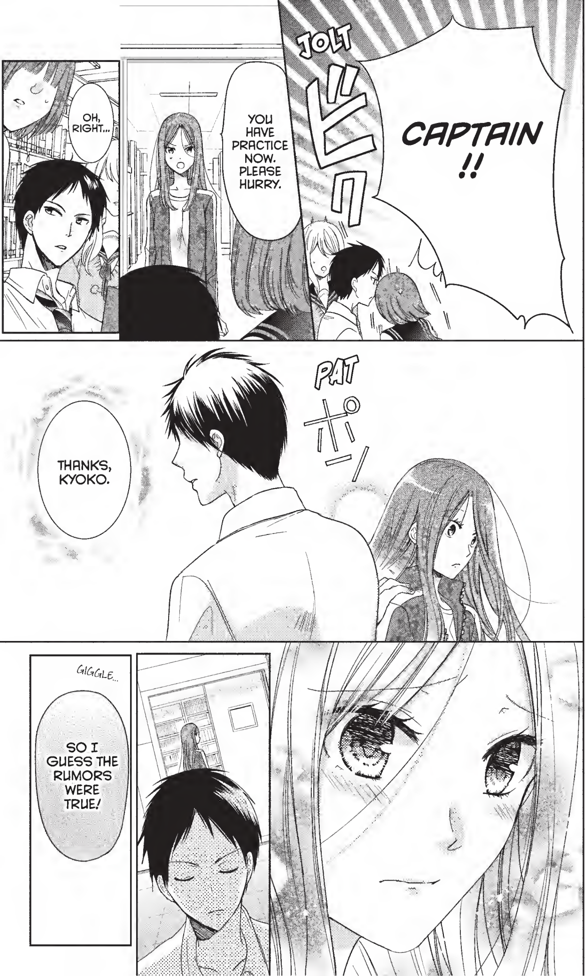

I WANT HIM TO DO WELL IN BASKETBALL, AND I ALSO WANT TO FOCUS ON BEING A MANAGER.
I CAME HERE SO I COULD GET THAT OFF MY CHEST.
MATSUMAE-SAN...IS AMAZING...
SHE FOLLOWS THROUGH ON WHAT SHE THINKS IS RIGHT.
BUT...
DO YOU...

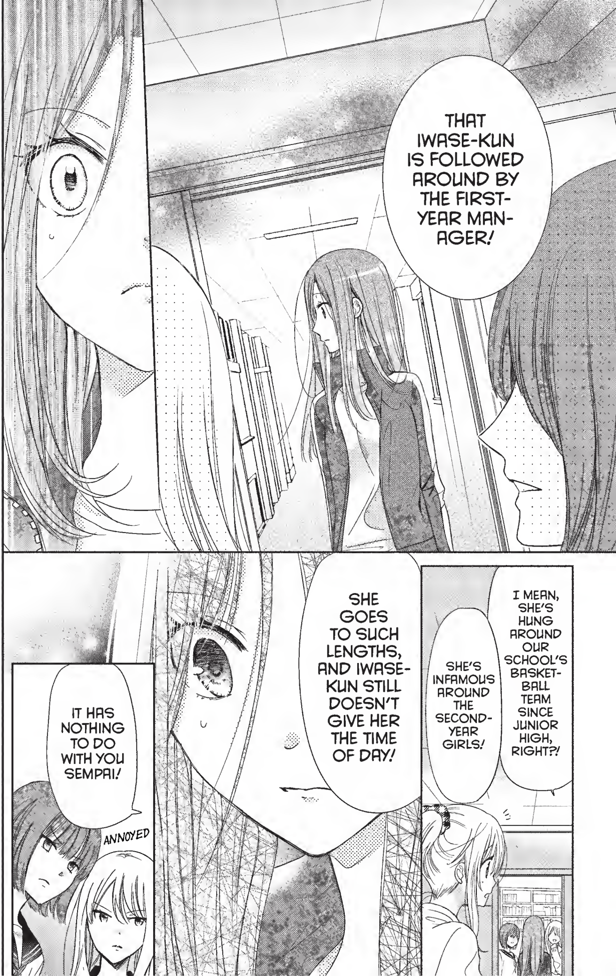

...REALLY WANT TO GIVE HIM UP, THOUGH?
W... WELL...
GASP
はっ

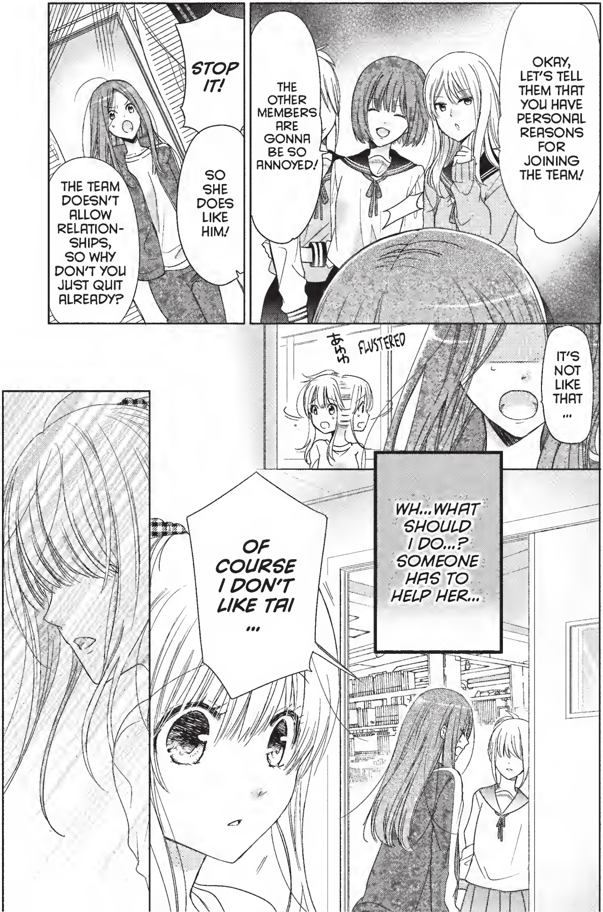

ISN'T THAT OBVIOUS? ANYWAY, HERE! 500 YEN FOR 10 MINUTES! KEEP THE RECEIPT!
DON'T YOU DARE TELL ANYONE, OKAY?!
バンッ
SLAM
MATSUMAE-SAN...
SHE KNOWS IN HER HEAD THAT SHE SHOULD GIVE HIM UP...
...BUT THE TRUTH IS, IT'S NOT THAT EASY...

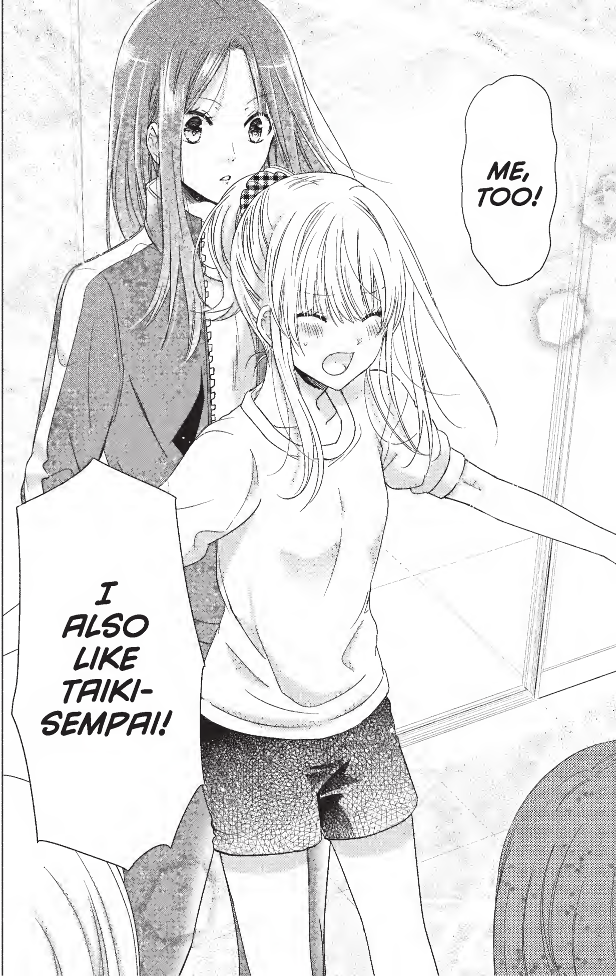

I UNDERSTAND THAT NOW, TOO...
FWEEP
ピー
OKAY! NEXT, WE'RE GONNA PRACTICE DEFENSE!
I WONDER IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP WITHOUT EXPOSING MYSELF...
MATSUMAE, IS THE CAPTAIN STILL NOT HERE?
HE WAS IN THE LIBRARY DURING SIXTH PERIOD... COULD HE BE THERE?
YEAH... COULD BE!
SINCE WAY BACK, HE'S NEVER BEEN ABLE TO PUT A BOOK DOWN ONCE HE STARTS... I'LL GO GET HIM.
"SINCE WAY BACK" ...?
COULD THE PERSON SHE LIKES BE...?

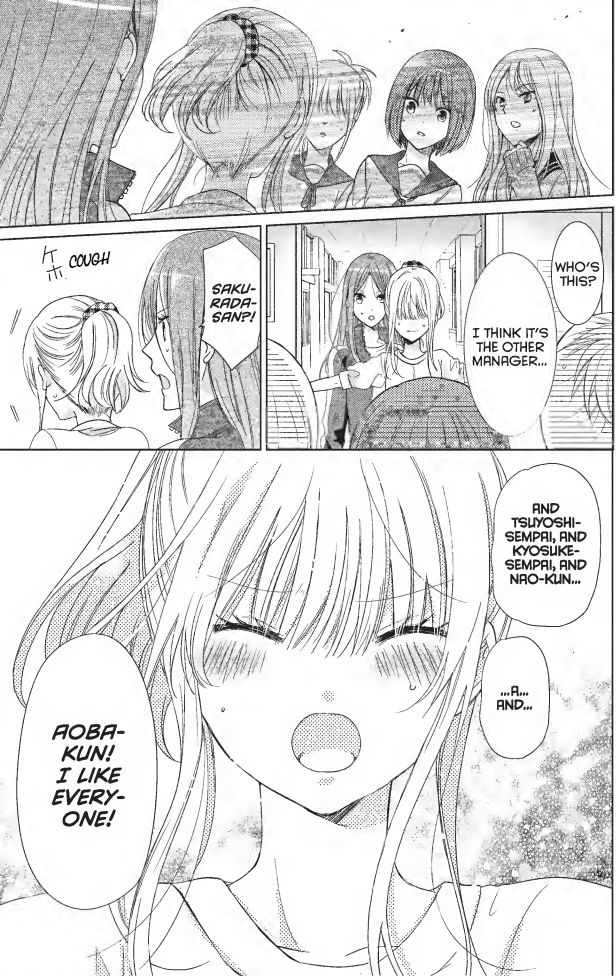

UH, I'LL GO WITH YOU!
WHAT'S WITH HER?
CLASS IS OVER, IWASE-KUN!
MM...
IS HE COMPLETELY OBLIVIOUS? INTERESTING!
HE'S SO INATTENTIVE TO EVERYTHING EXCEPT BASKETBALL!
HA HA HA!
OH... CAPTAIN ...
HEY! SO THE BASKETBALL TEAM ISN'T ALLOWED TO HAVE RELATIONSHIPS RIGHT NOW, YEAH?
BUT YOU'RE AVAILABLE AFTER THE DISTRICT PRELIMINARIES, NO?

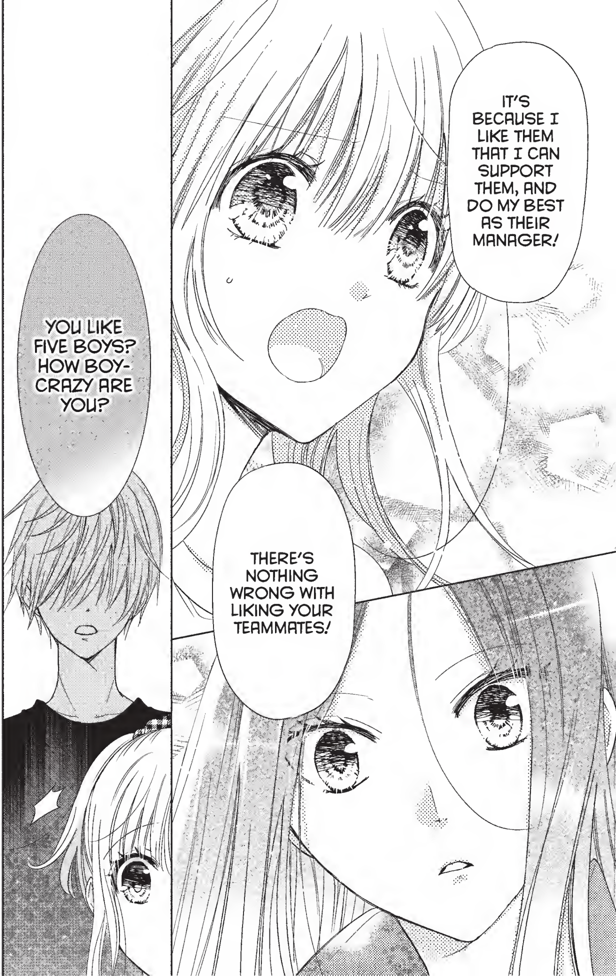

JOLT
ビク
CAPTAIN !!
YOU HAVE PRACTICE NOW. PLEASE HURRY.
OH, RIGHT...
PAT
ポン
THANKS, KYOKO.
GIGGLE...
SO I GUESS THE RUMORS WERE TRUE!

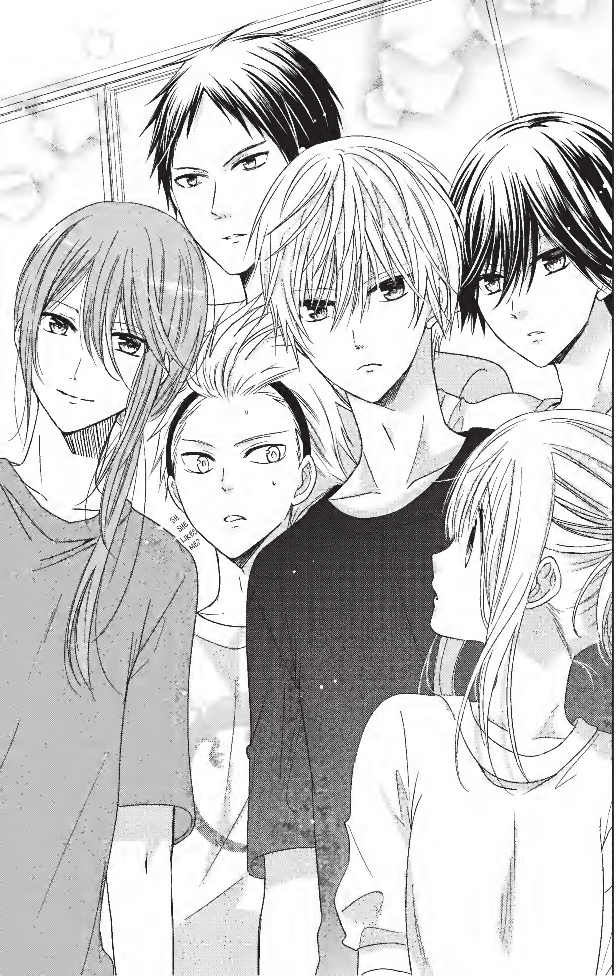

THAT IWASE-KUN IS FOLLOWED AROUND BY THE FIRST-YEAR MANAGER!
I MEAN, SHE'S HUNG AROUND OUR SCHOOL'S BASKETBALL TEAM SINCE JUNIOR HIGH, RIGHT?!
SHE'S INFAMOUS AROUND THE SECOND-YEAR GIRLS!
SHE GOES TO SUCH LENGTHS, AND IWASE-KUN STILL DOESN'T GIVE HER THE TIME OF DAY!
IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU SEMPAI!
ANNOYED

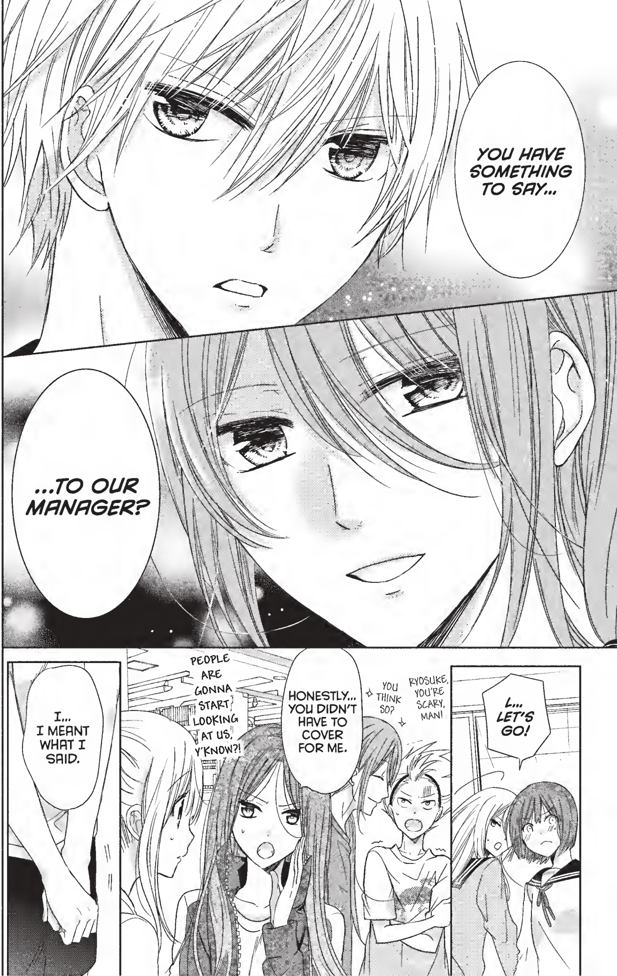

OKAY, LET'S TELL THEM THAT YOU HAVE PERSONAL REASONS FOR JOINING THE TEAM!
THE OTHER MEMBERS ARE GONNA BE SO ANNOYED!
STOP IT!
SO SHE DOES LIKE HIM!
THE TEAM DOESN'T ALLOW RELATIONSHIPS, SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST QUIT ALREADY?
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT...
あわわ FLUSTERED
WH...WHAT SHOULD I DO...? SOMEONE HAS TO HELP HER...
OF COURSE I DON'T LIKE TAI...

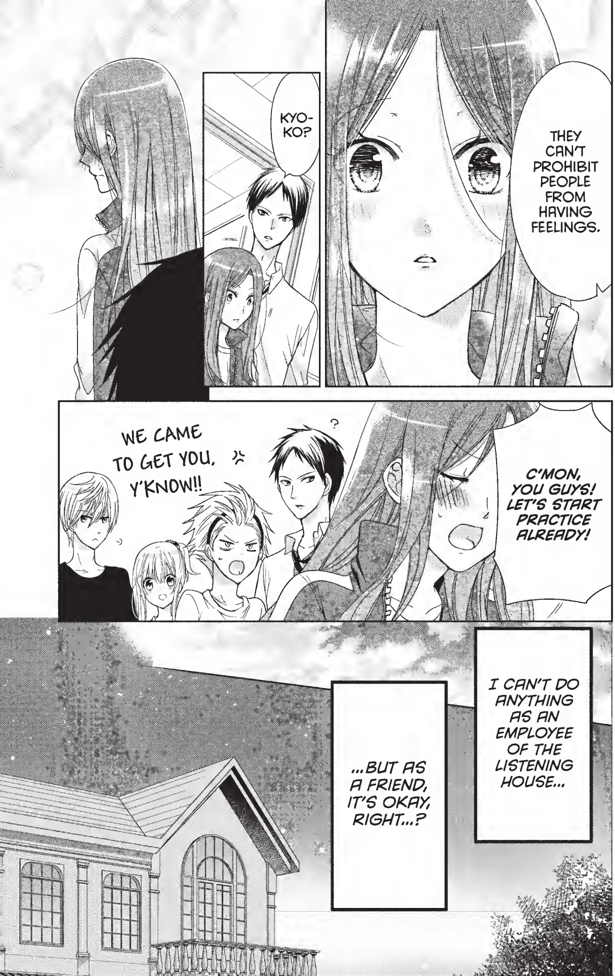

ME, TOO!
I ALSO LIKE TAIKI-SEMPAI!

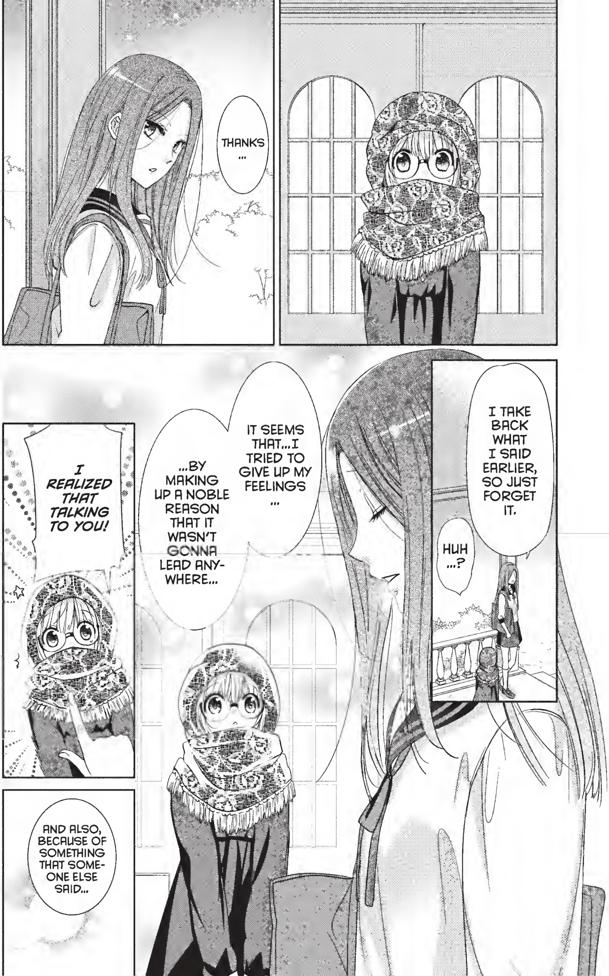

WHO'S THIS?
I THINK IT'S THE OTHER MANAGER...
SAKURADA-SAN?!
ケホ COUGH
AND TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI, AND KYOSUKE-SEMPAI, AND NAO-KUN...
...A... AND...
AOBA-KUN! I LIKE EVERYONE!

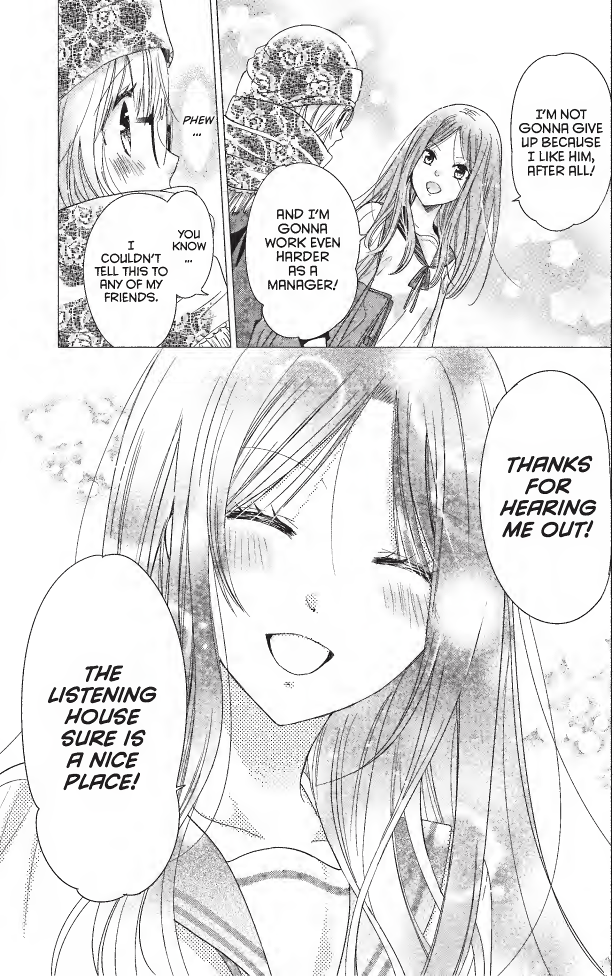

IT'S BECAUSE I LIKE THEM THAT I CAN SUPPORT THEM, AND DO MY BEST AS THEIR MANAGER!
YOU LIKE FIVE BOYS? HOW BOY-CRAZY ARE YOU?
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH LIKING YOUR TEAMMATES!

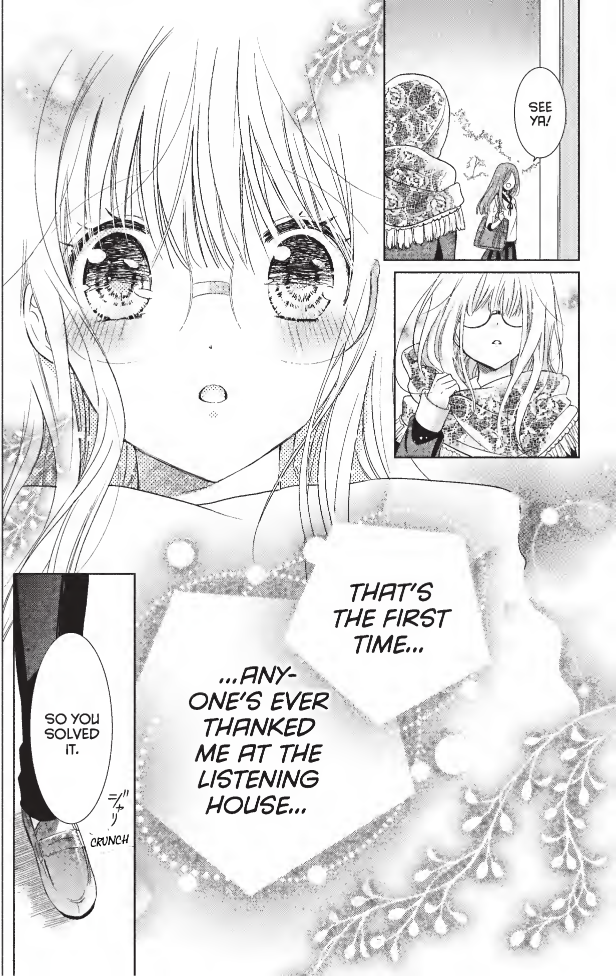

SH... SHE LIKES ME?

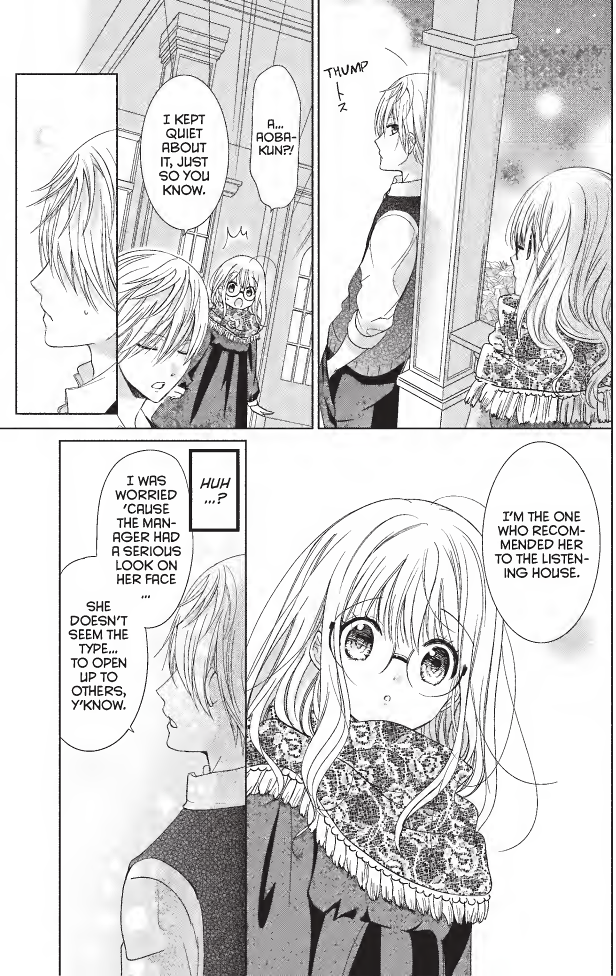

YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY...
...TO OUR MANAGER?
L... LET'S GO!
RYOSUKE, YOU'RE SCARY, MAN!
YOU THINK SO?
HONESTLY... YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO COVER FOR ME.
PEOPLE ARE GONNA START LOOKING AT US, Y'KNOW?!
I... I MEANT WHAT I SAID.

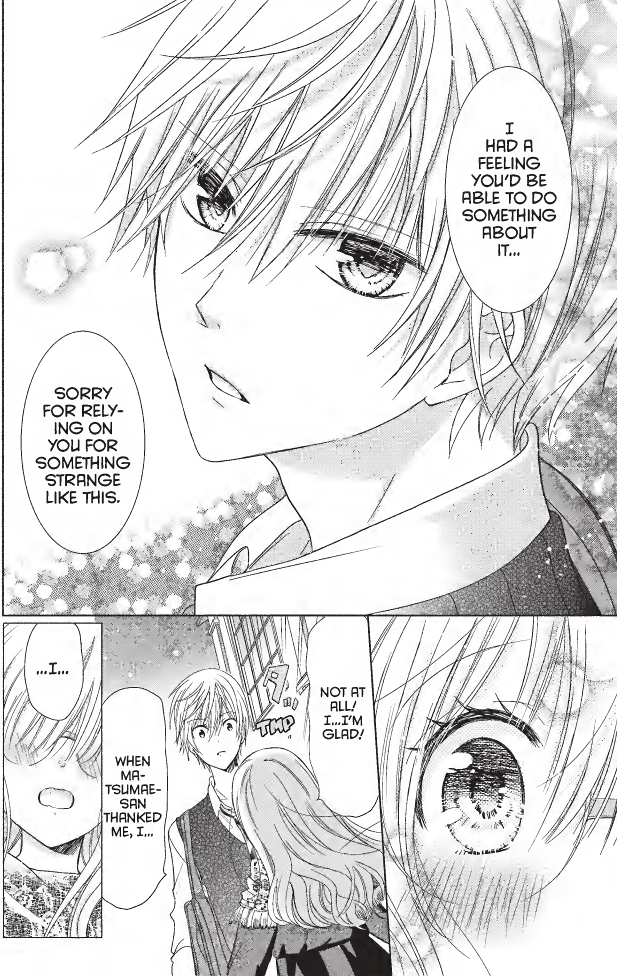

THEY CAN'T PROHIBIT PEOPLE FROM HAVING FEELINGS.
KYO-KO?
C'MON, YOU GUYS! LET'S START PRACTICE ALREADY!
WE CAME TO GET YOU, Y'KNOW!!
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING AS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE LISTENING HOUSE...
...BUT AS A FRIEND, IT'S OKAY, RIGHT...?

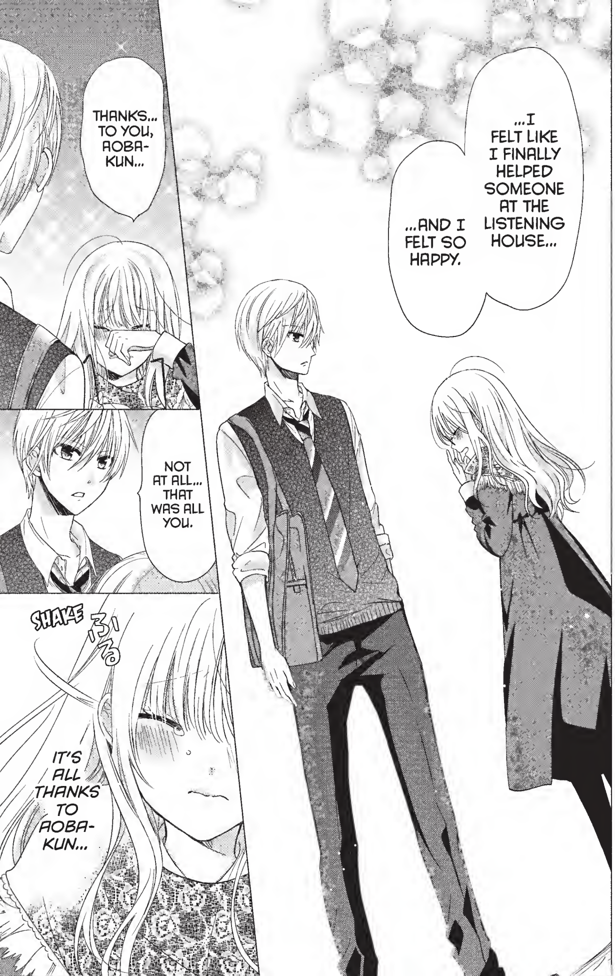

THANKS ...
I TAKE BACK WHAT I SAID EARLIER, SO JUST FORGET IT.
HUH ...?
IT SEEMS THAT...I TRIED TO GIVE UP MY FEELINGS ...
...BY MAKING UP A NOBLE REASON THAT IT WASN'T GONNA LEAD ANYWHERE...
I REALIZED THAT TALKING TO YOU!
AND ALSO, BECAUSE OF SOMETHING THAT SOMEONE ELSE SAID...

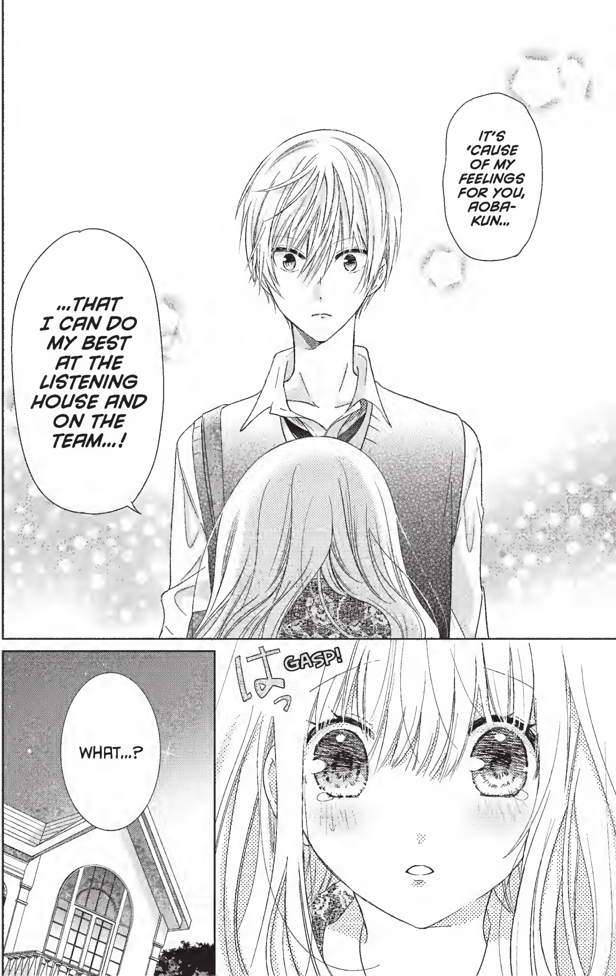

I'M NOT GONNA GIVE UP BECAUSE I LIKE HIM, AFTER ALL!
AND I'M GONNA WORK EVEN HARDER AS A MANAGER!
PHEW ...
YOU KNOW ... I COULDN'T TELL THIS TO ANY OF MY FRIENDS.
THANKS FOR HEARING ME OUT!
THE LISTENING HOUSE SURE IS A NICE PLACE!


SEE YA!
THAT'S THE FIRST TIME...
...ANYONE'S EVER THANKED ME AT THE LISTENING HOUSE...
SO YOU SOLVED IT.
ジャリ
CRUNCH


THUMP
トス
A... AOBA-KUN?!
I KEPT QUIET ABOUT IT, JUST SO YOU KNOW.
I'M THE ONE WHO RECOMMENDED HER TO THE LISTENING HOUSE.
HUH...?
I WAS WORRIED 'CAUSE THE MANAGER HAD A SERIOUS LOOK ON HER FACE...
SHE DOESN'T SEEM THE TYPE... TO OPEN UP TO OTHERS, Y'KNOW.

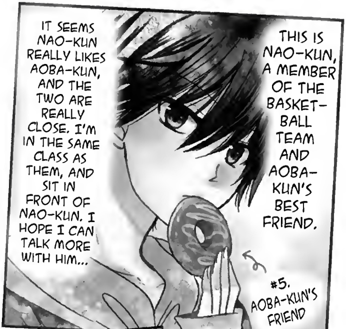

I HAD A FEELING YOU'D BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT...
SORRY FOR RELYING ON YOU FOR SOMETHING STRANGE LIKE THIS.
NOT AT ALL! I...I'M GLAD!
TMP
...I...
WHEN MATSUMAE-SAN THANKED ME, I...

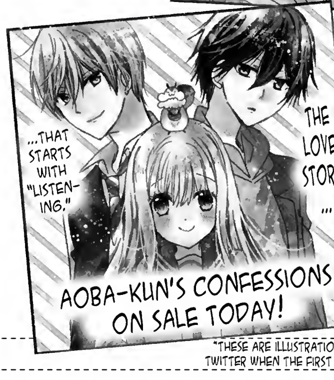

...I FELT LIKE I FINALLY HELPED SOMEONE AT THE LISTENING HOUSE...
...AND I FELT SO HAPPY.
THANKS... TO YOU, AOBA-KUN...
NOT AT ALL... THAT WAS ALL YOU.
SHAKE
ふる
IT'S ALL THANKS TO AOBA-KUN...


IT'S 'CAUSE OF MY FEELINGS FOR YOU, AOBA-KUN...
...THAT I CAN DO MY BEST AT THE LISTENING HOUSE AND ON THE TEAM...!
はっ
GASP!
WHAT...?

Time.8

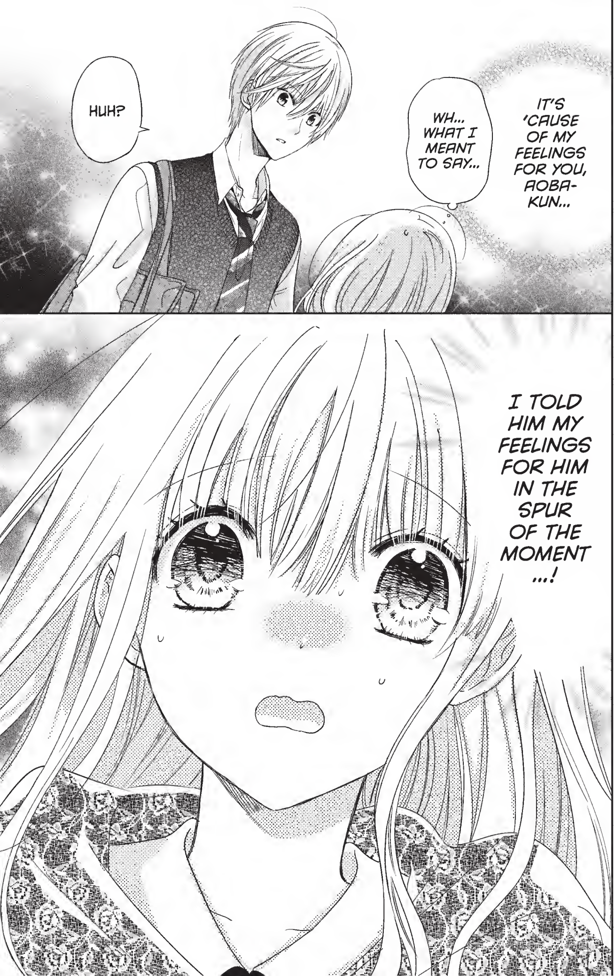
ME TOO

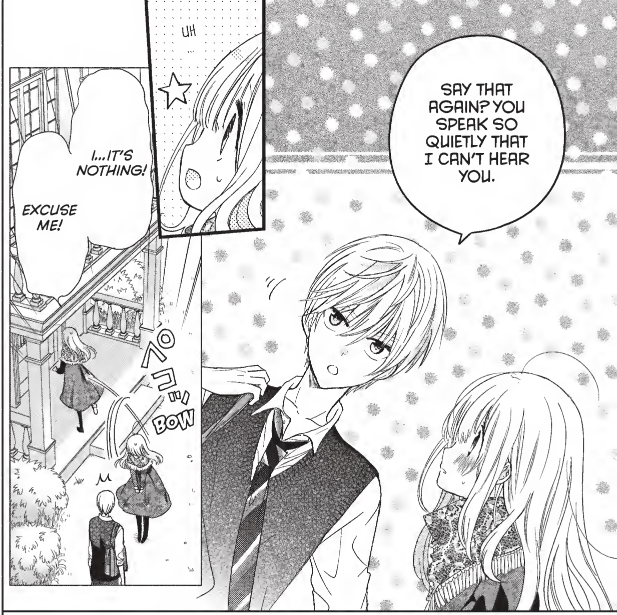

THIS IS NAO-KUN, A MEMBER OF THE BASKETBALL TEAM AND AOBA-KUN'S BEST FRIEND.
#5. AOBA-KUN'S FRIEND
IT SEEMS NAO-KUN REALLY LIKES AOBA-KUN, AND THE TWO ARE REALLY CLOSE. I'M IN THE SAME CLASS AS THEM, AND SIT IN FRONT OF NAO-KUN. I HOPE I CAN TALK MORE WITH HIM...


THE LOVE STORY...
...THAT STARTS WITH "LISTENING."
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS ON SALE TODAY!

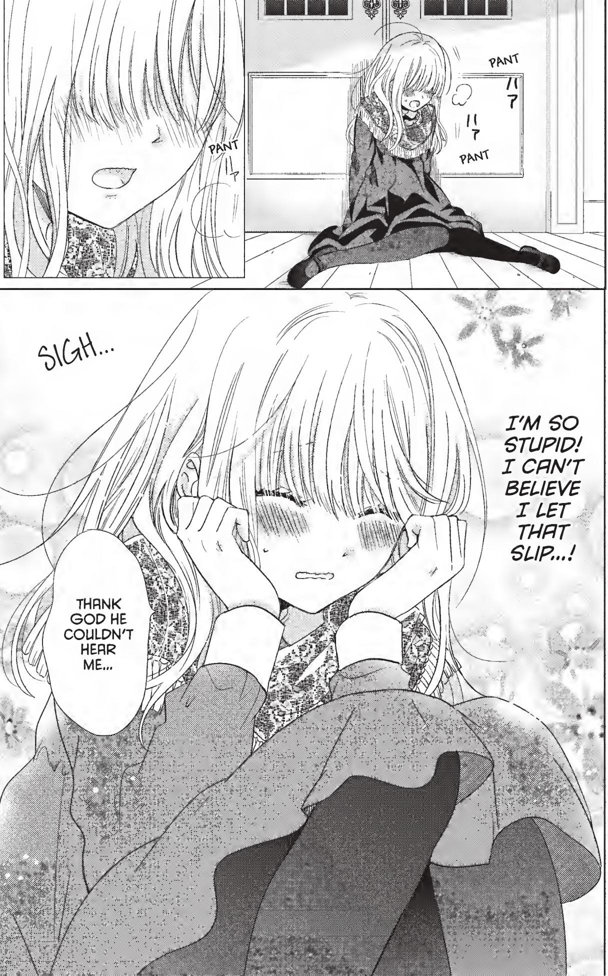
AOBAKUN
NI
KIKITAI
KOTO

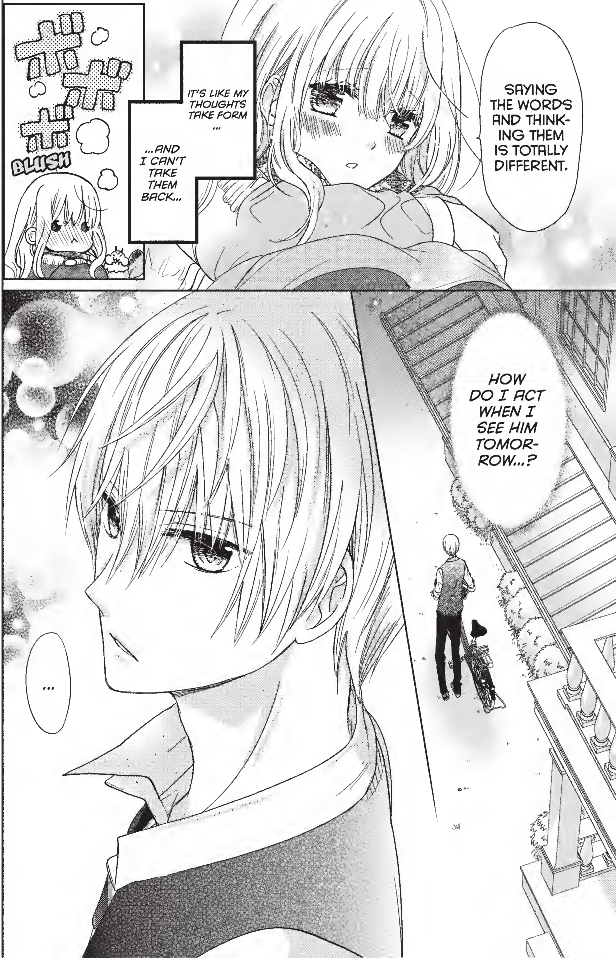
*THESE ARE ILLUSTRATIONS THAT WERE PUBLISHED ON TWITTER WHEN THE FIRST VOLUME WAS BEING RELEASED.

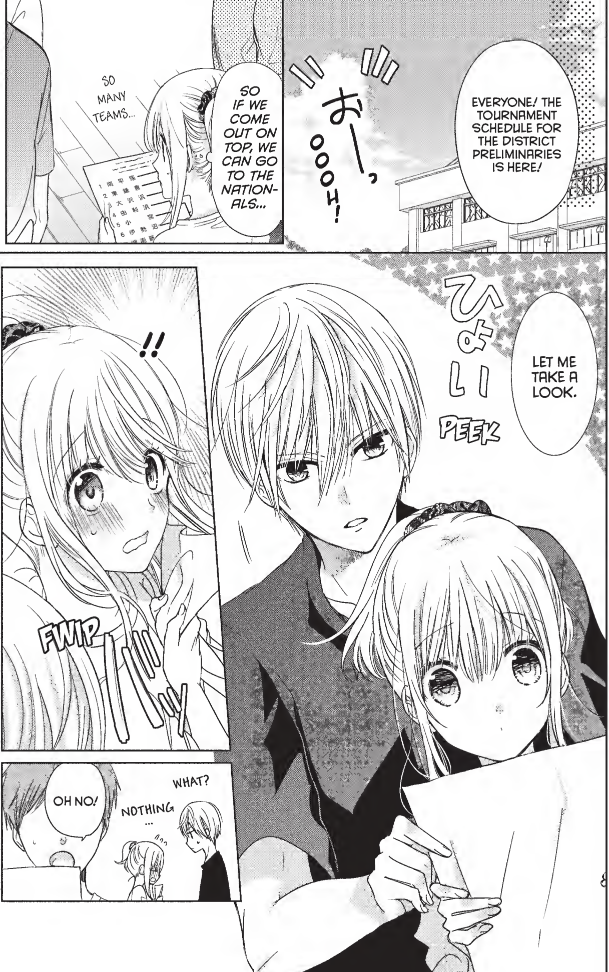

IT'S 'CAUSE OF MY FEELINGS FOR YOU, AOBA-KUN...
WH... WHAT I MEANT TO SAY...
HUH?
I TOLD HIM MY FEELINGS FOR HIM IN THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT...!

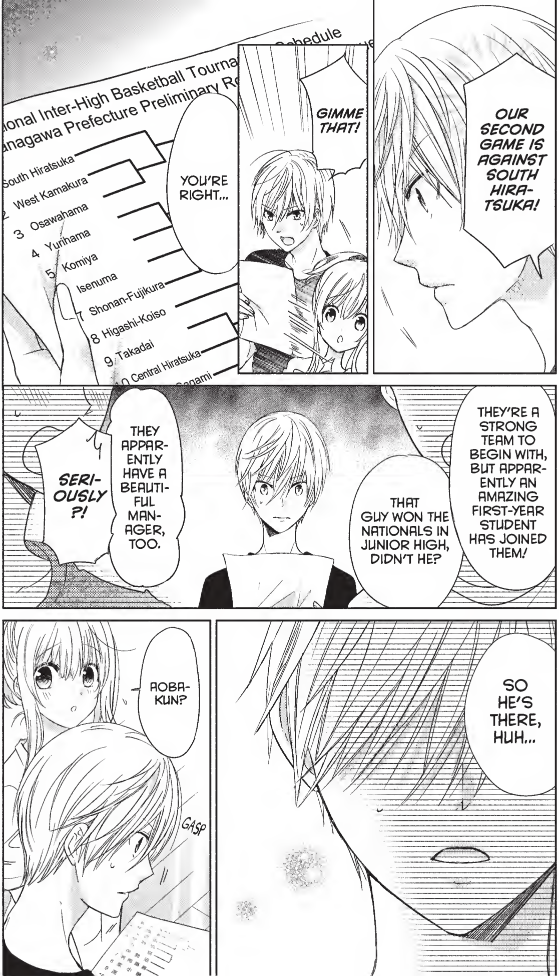

SAY THAT AGAIN? YOU SPEAK SO QUIETLY THAT I CAN'T HEAR YOU.
UH ...
I...IT'S NOTHING!
EXCUSE ME!
ペコッ
BOW

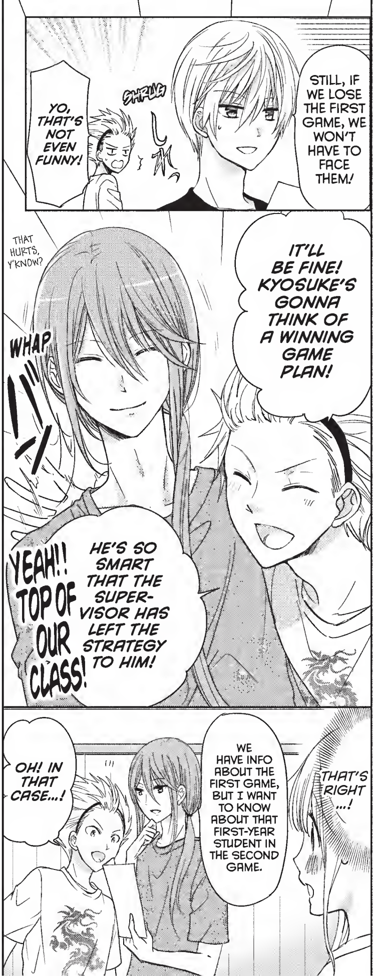
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS


PANT
ハァ
ハァ
PANT
PANT
ハァ
SIGH...
I'M SO STUPID! I CAN'T BELIEVE I LET THAT SLIP...!
THANK GOD HE COULDN'T HEAR ME...

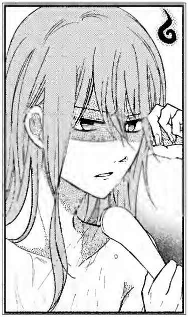

SAYING THE WORDS AND THINKING THEM IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT.
IT'S LIKE MY THOUGHTS TAKE FORM ...
...AND I CAN'T TAKE THEM BACK...
ボボボ
BLUSH
HOW DO I ACT WHEN I SEE HIM TOMORROW...?
...


EVERYONE! THE TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE FOR THE DISTRICT PRELIMINARIES IS HERE!
おー
OOOH!
SO IF WE COME OUT ON TOP, WE CAN GO TO THE NATIONALS...
SO MANY TEAMS...
1 南平塚
2 東鎌倉
大沢浜
4 由利浜
5 小宮
6 伊勢沼
LET ME TAKE A LOOK.
ひょい
PEEK
!!
FWIP
OH NO!
WHAT?
NOTHING...


OUR SECOND GAME IS AGAINST SOUTH HIRATSUKA!
GIMME THAT!
ional Inter-High Basketball Tourna
Schedule
anagawa Prefecture Preliminary Ro
South Hiratsuka
West Kamakura
3 Osawahama
4 Yurihama
5 Komiya
Isenuma
7 Shonan-Fujikura
8 Higashi-Koiso
9 Takadai
Central Hiratsuka
Sagami
YOU'RE RIGHT...
THEY'RE A STRONG TEAM TO BEGIN WITH, BUT APPARENTLY AN AMAZING FIRST-YEAR STUDENT HAS JOINED THEM!
THAT GUY WON THE NATIONALS IN JUNIOR HIGH, DIDN'T HE?
THEY APPARENTLY HAVE A BEAUTIFUL MANAGER, TOO.
SERIOUSLY?!
SO HE'S THERE, HUH...
AOBA-KUN?
GASP

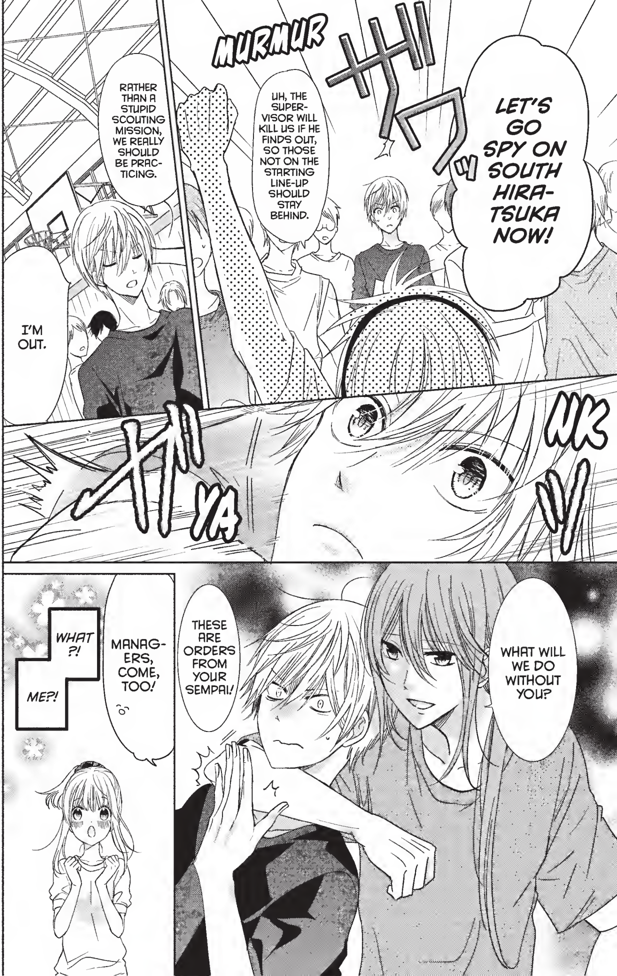

STILL, IF WE LOSE THE FIRST GAME, WE WON'T HAVE TO FACE THEM!
SHRUG
YO, THAT'S NOT EVEN FUNNY!
IT'LL BE FINE! KYOSUKE'S GONNA THINK OF A WINNING GAME PLAN!
THAT HURTS, Y'KNOW?
WHAP
HE'S SO SMART THAT THE SUPERVISOR HAS LEFT THE STRATEGY TO HIM!
YEAH!! TOP OF OUR CLASS!
THAT'S RIGHT ...!
WE HAVE INFO ABOUT THE FIRST GAME, BUT I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THAT FIRST-YEAR STUDENT IN THE SECOND GAME.
OH! IN THAT CASE...!

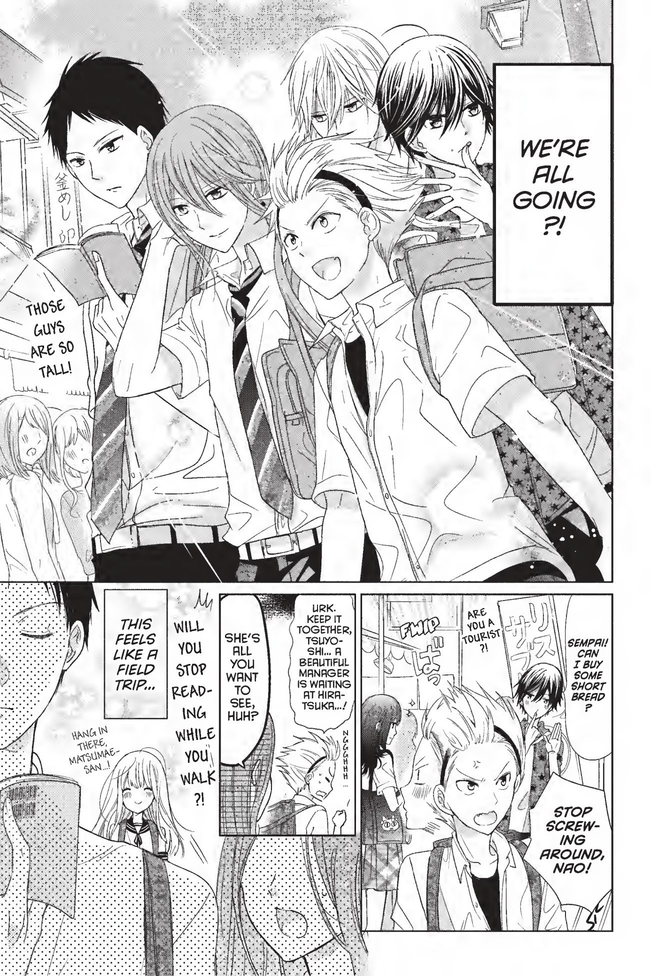
KYOSUKE KAZANUMA
BORN MAY 21ST
BLOOD TYPE: O
HEIGHT: 180CM
FAVORITE FOOD:
BOLOGNESE
SASHIMI

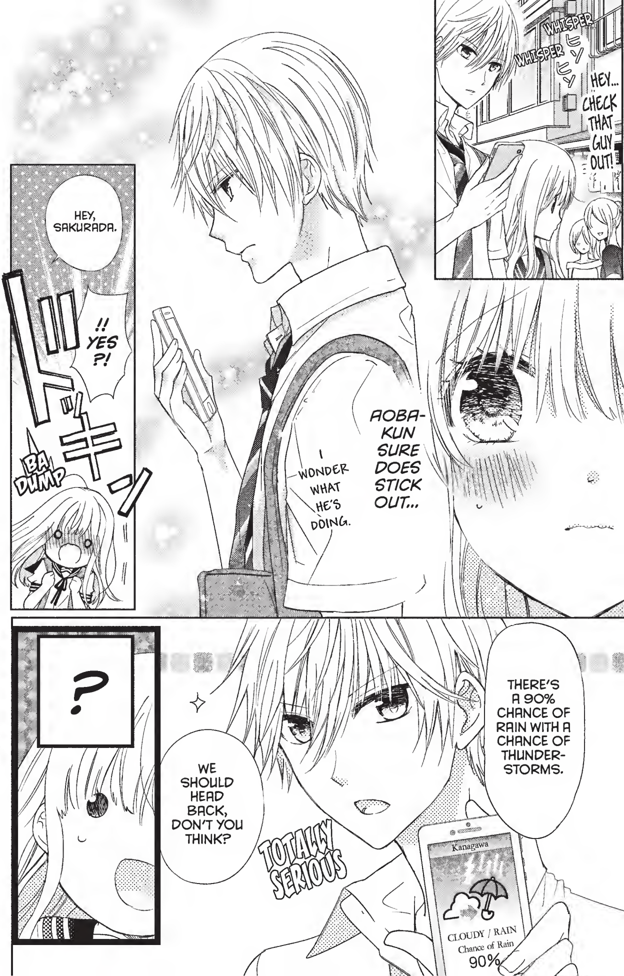


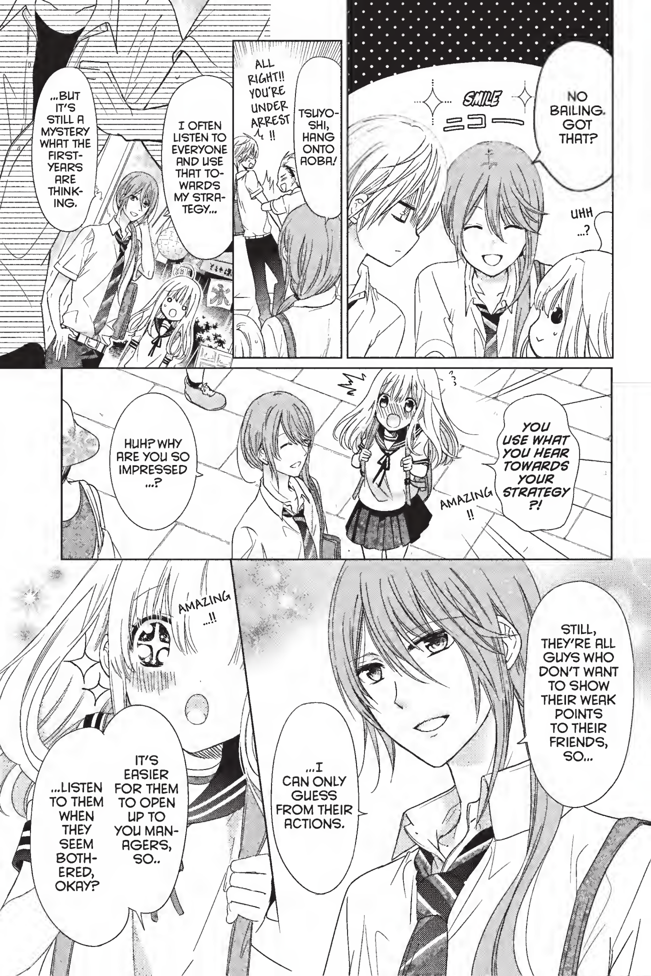
6:30AM
SINCE HE'S TERRIBLE AT WAKING UP, HE TAKES A SHOWER IN THE MORNING TO FEEL REFRESHED.

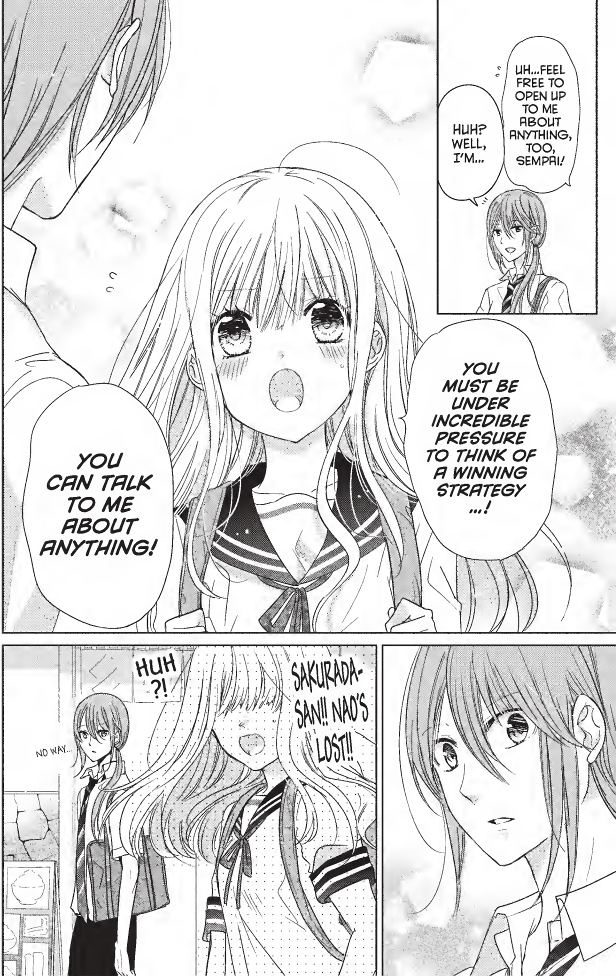
MY FAMILY RUNS A COFFEE SHOP!

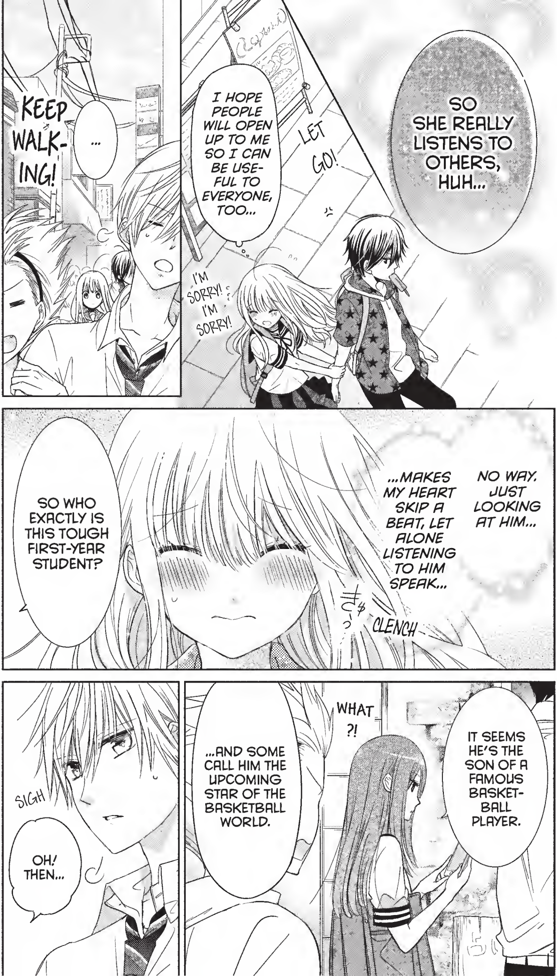

LET'S GO SPY ON SOUTH HIRATSUKA NOW!
MURMUR
UH, THE SUPERVISOR WILL KILL US IF HE FINDS OUT, SO THOSE NOT ON THE STARTING LINE-UP SHOULD STAY BEHIND.
RATHER THAN A STUPID SCOUTING MISSION, WE REALLY SHOULD BE PRACTICING.
I'M OUT.
NK
YA
WHAT WILL WE DO WITHOUT YOU?
THESE ARE ORDERS FROM YOUR SEMPAI!
MANAGERS, COME, TOO!
WHAT?!
ME?!

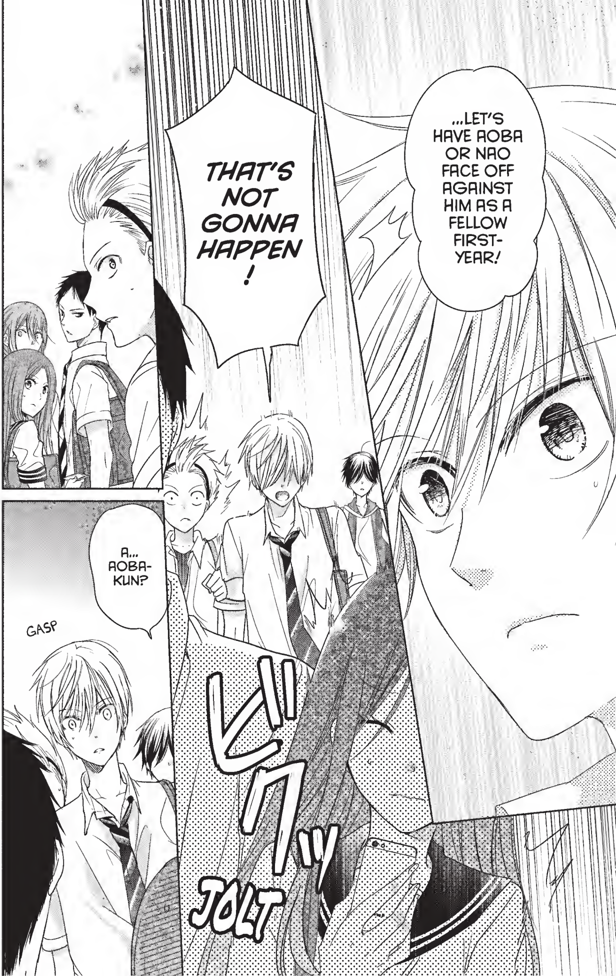

WE'RE ALL GOING ?!
釜めし 卯
THOSE GUYS ARE SO TALL!
ARE YOU A TOURIST ?!
FWIP
ぱっ
SEMPAI!! CAN I BUY SOME SHORT BREAD ?
STOP SCREWING AROUND, NAO!
URK. KEEP IT TOGETHER, TSUYOSHI... A BEAUTIFUL MANAGER IS WAITING AT HIRATSUKA...!
SHE'S ALL YOU WANT TO SEE, HUH?
NGGGHHH...
THIS FEELS LIKE A FIELD TRIP...
WILL YOU STOP READING WHILE YOU WALK ?!
HANG IN THERE, MATSUMAE-SAN...!

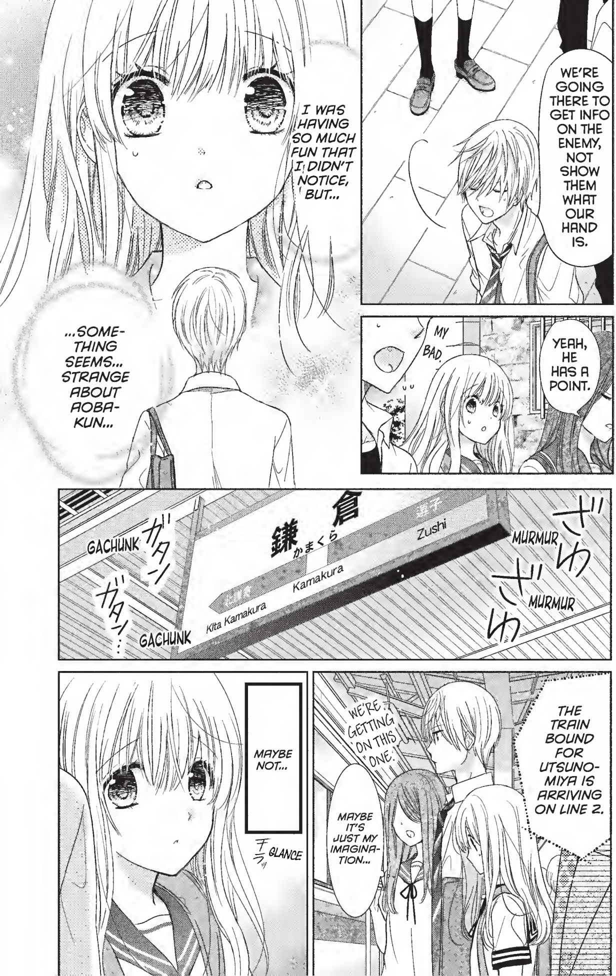

WHISPER
WHISPER
ヒソヒソ
HEY... CHECK THAT GUY OUT!
AOBA-KUN SURE DOES STICK OUT...
I WONDER WHAT HE'S DOING.
HEY, SAKURADA.
!! YES?!
ドッキーン
BA DUMP
THERE'S A 90% CHANCE OF RAIN WITH A CHANCE OF THUNDERSTORMS.
WE SHOULD HEAD BACK, DON'T YOU THINK?
TOTALLY SERIOUS
Kanagawa
CLOUDY / RAIN
Chance of Rain
90%
?

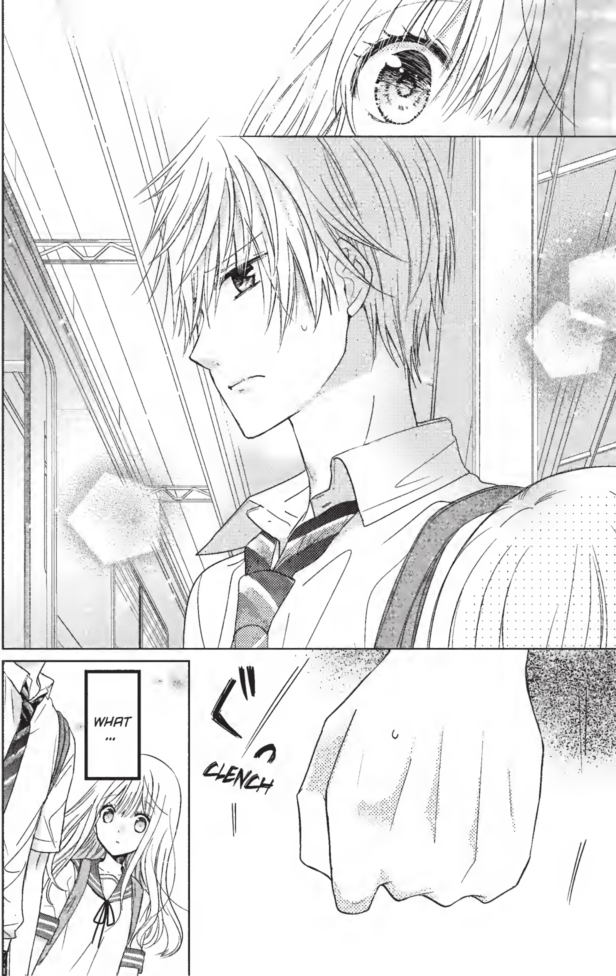

NO BAILING. GOT THAT?
SMILE
ニコー
UHH ...?
TSUYOSHI, HANG ONTO AOBA!
ALL RIGHT!! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!!
I OFTEN LISTEN TO EVERYONE AND USE THAT TOWARDS MY STRATEGY...
...BUT IT'S STILL A MYSTERY WHAT THE FIRST-YEARS ARE THINKING.
YOU USE WHAT YOU HEAR TOWARDS YOUR STRATEGY?!
AMAZING!!
HUH? WHY ARE YOU SO IMPRESSED...?
STILL, THEY'RE ALL GUYS WHO DON'T WANT TO SHOW THEIR WEAK POINTS TO THEIR FRIENDS, SO...
...I CAN ONLY GUESS FROM THEIR ACTIONS.
AMAZING...!!
IT'S EASIER FOR THEM TO OPEN UP TO YOU MANAGERS, SO..
...LISTEN TO THEM WHEN THEY SEEM BOTHERED, OKAY?

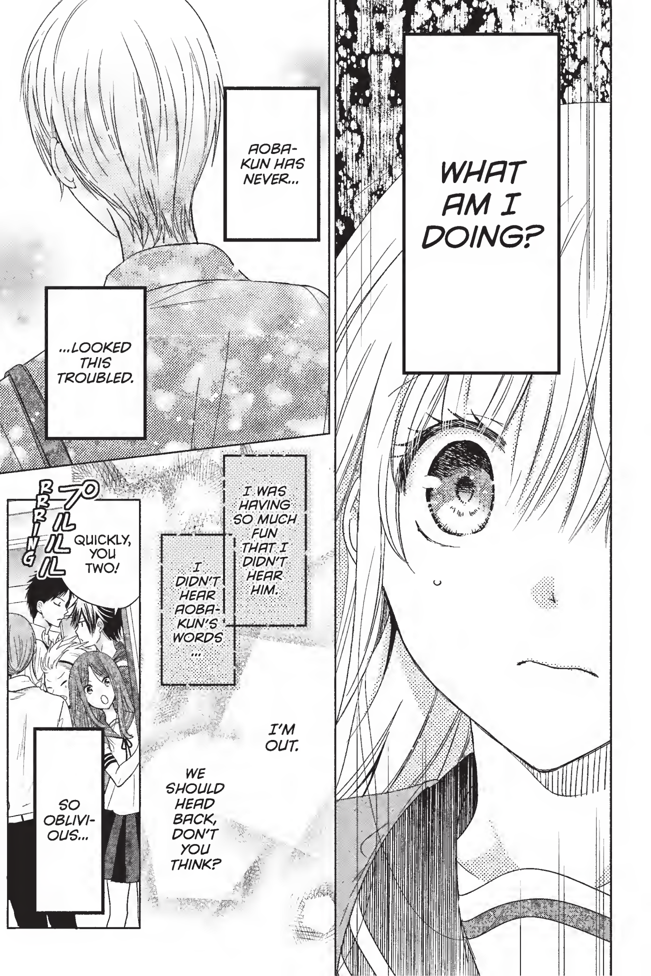

UH...FEEL FREE TO OPEN UP TO ME ABOUT ANYTHING, TOO, SEMPAI!
HUH? WELL, I'M...
YOU MUST BE UNDER INCREDIBLE PRESSURE TO THINK OF A WINNING STRATEGY ...!
YOU CAN TALK TO ME ABOUT ANYTHING!
SAKURADA-SAN!! NAO'S LOST!!
HUH ?!
NO WAY...

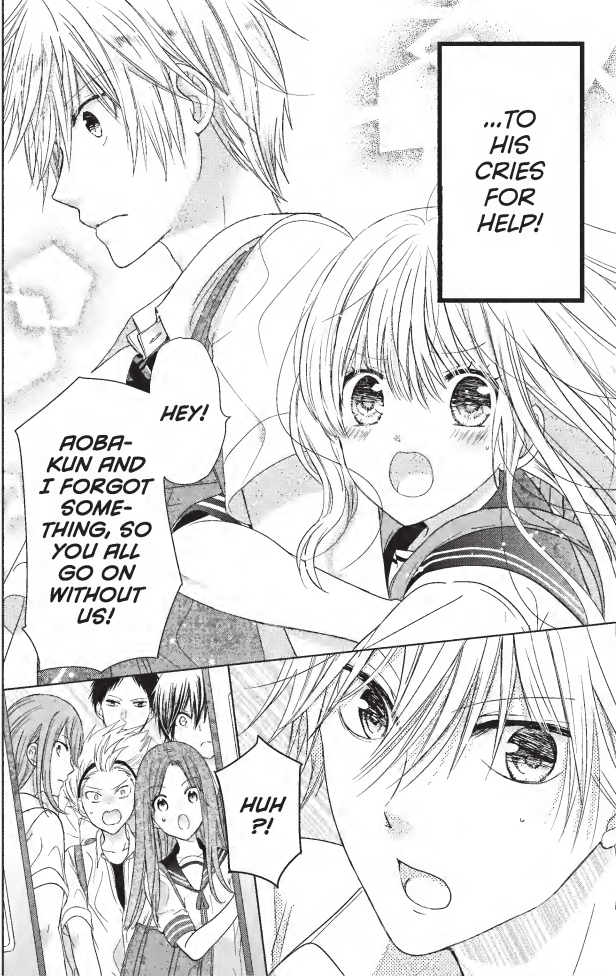

SO SHE REALLY LISTENS TO OTHERS, HUH...
LET GO!
I HOPE PEOPLE WILL OPEN UP TO ME SO I CAN BE USEFUL TO EVERYONE, TOO...
I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!
...
KEEP WALKING!
NO WAY. JUST LOOKING AT HIM...
...MAKES MY HEART SKIP A BEAT, LET ALONE LISTENING TO HIM SPEAK...
CLENCH
SO WHO EXACTLY IS THIS TOUGH FIRST-YEAR STUDENT?
IT SEEMS HE'S THE SON OF A FAMOUS BASKETBALL PLAYER.
WHAT?!
...AND SOME CALL HIM THE UPCOMING STAR OF THE BASKETBALL WORLD.
SIGH
OH! THEN...

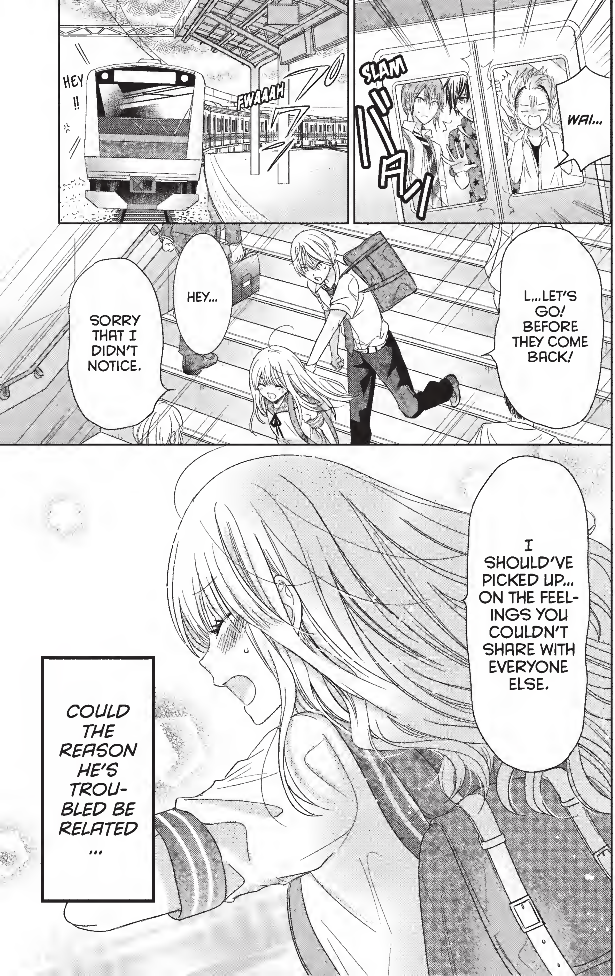

...LET'S HAVE AOBA OR NAO FACE OFF AGAINST HIM AS A FELLOW FIRST-YEAR!
THAT'S NOT GONNA HAPPEN!
ビクッ
JOLT
A... AOBA-KUN?
GASP

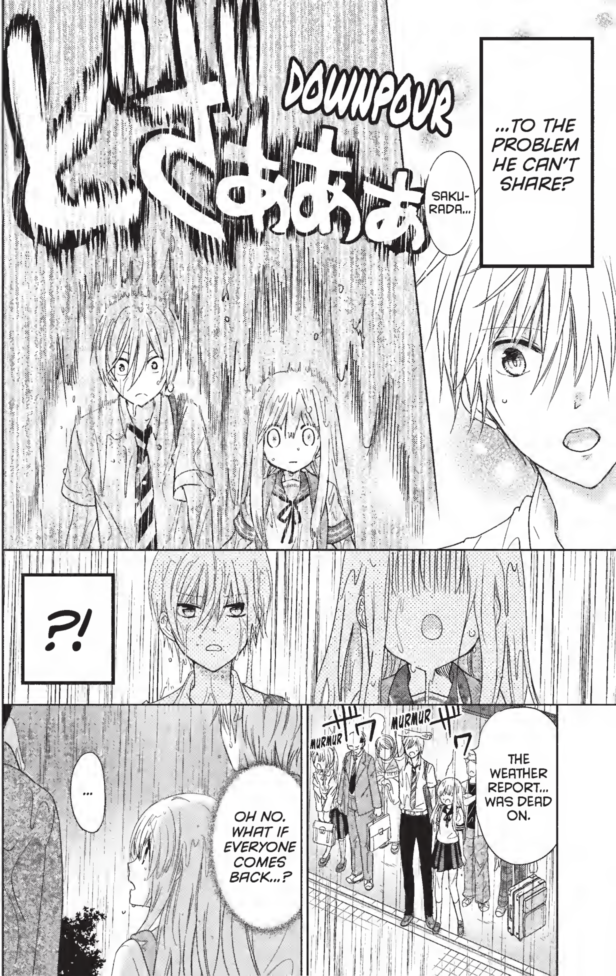

WE'RE GOING THERE TO GET INFO ON THE ENEMY, NOT SHOW THEM WHAT OUR HAND IS.
MY BAD
YEAH, HE HAS A POINT.
I WAS HAVING SO MUCH FUN THAT I DIDN'T NOTICE, BUT...
...SOMETHING SEEMS... STRANGE ABOUT AOBA-KUN...
ざわ MURMUR
ざわ MURMUR
鎌倉
かまくら
Kamakura
逗子
Zushi
Kita Kamakura
ガタン GACHUNK
ガタン… GACHUNK
THE TRAIN BOUND FOR UTSUNOMIYA IS ARRIVING ON LINE 2.
WE'RE GETTING ON THIS ONE.
MAYBE IT'S JUST MY IMAGINATION...
MAYBE NOT...
チラッ GLANCE

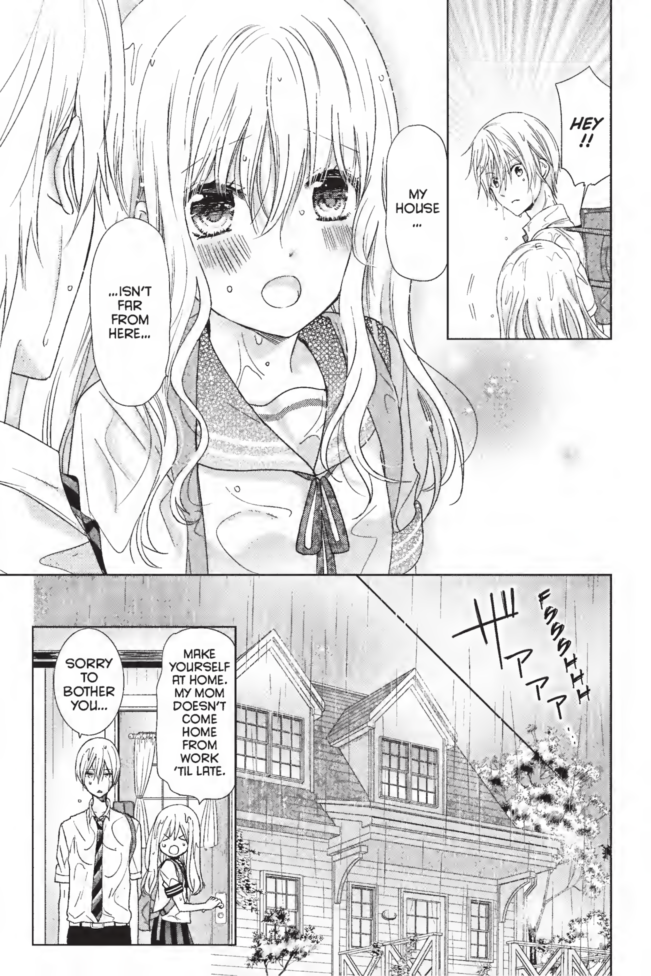

ぐっ
CLENCH
WHAT ...

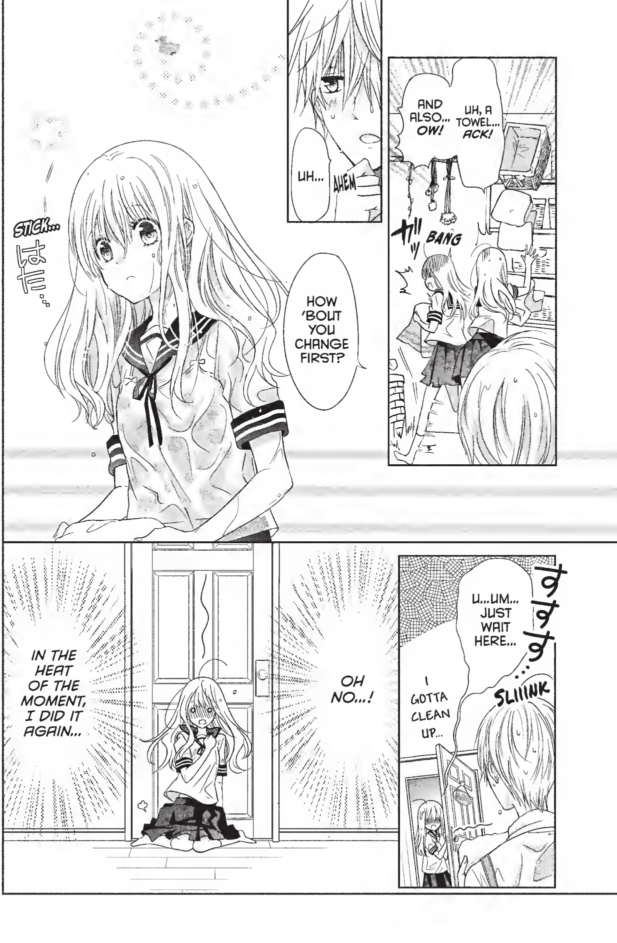

WHAT AM I DOING?
AOBA-KUN HAS NEVER...
...LOOKED THIS TROUBLED.
I WAS HAVING SO MUCH FUN THAT I DIDN'T HEAR HIM.
I DIDN'T HEAR AOBA-KUN'S WORDS...
RRRING
QUICKLY, YOU TWO!
I'M OUT.
WE SHOULD HEAD BACK, DON'T YOU THINK?
SO OBLIVIOUS...

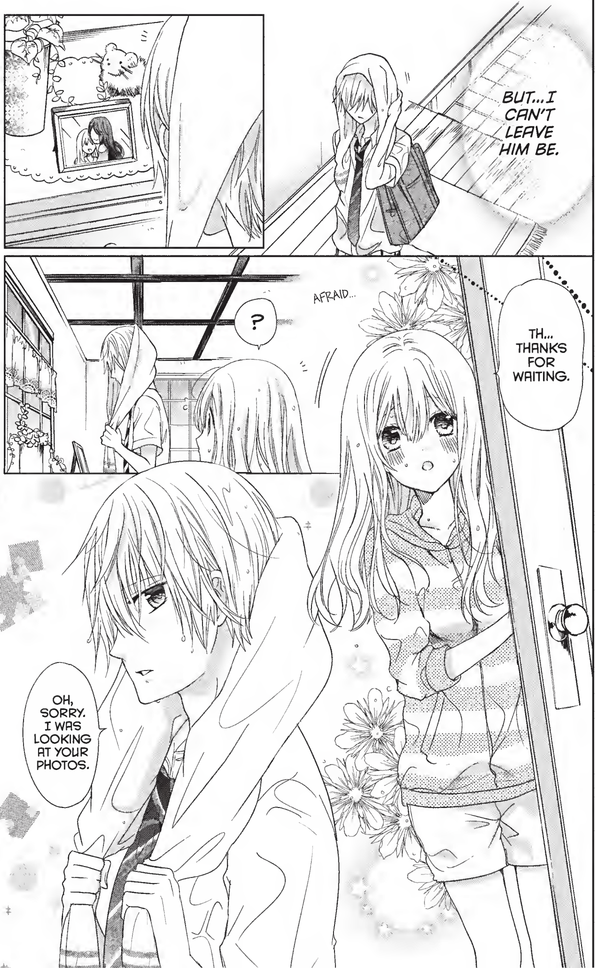

...TO HIS CRIES FOR HELP!
HEY! AOBA-KUN AND I FORGOT SOMETHING, SO YOU ALL GO ON WITHOUT US!
HUH?!

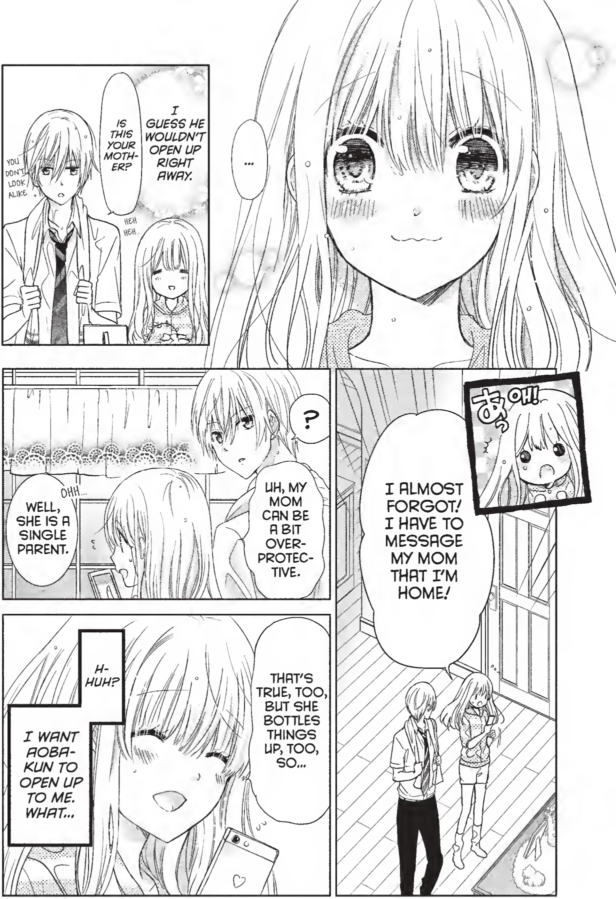

SLAM
WAI...
FWAAAH
HEY !!
L...LET'S GO! BEFORE THEY COME BACK!
HEY...
SORRY THAT I DIDN'T NOTICE.
I SHOULD'VE PICKED UP... ON THE FEELINGS YOU COULDN'T SHARE WITH EVERYONE ELSE.
COULD THE REASON HE'S TROUBLED BE RELATED ...

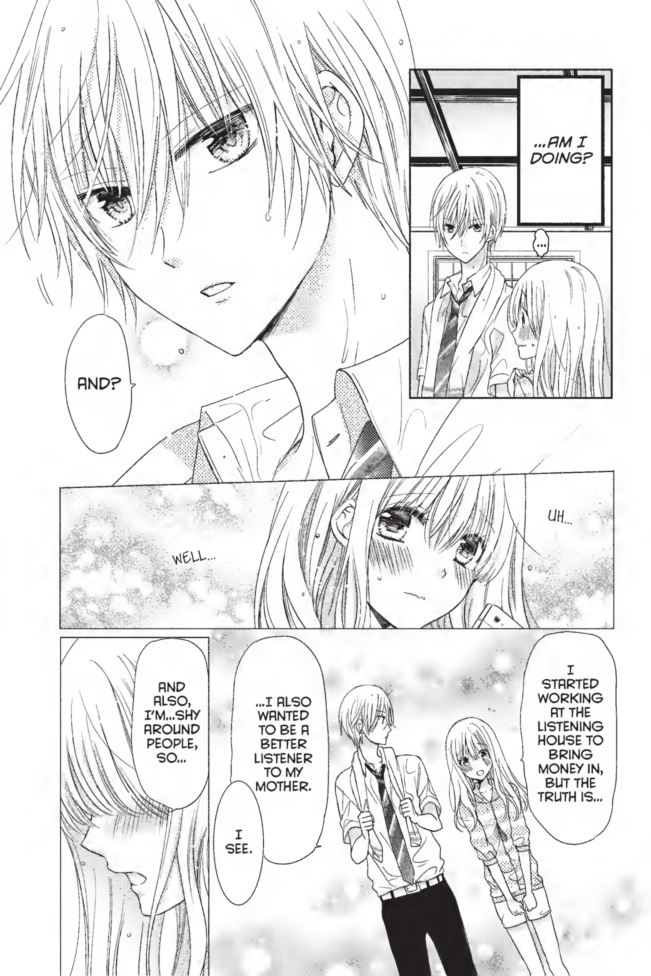

...TO THE PROBLEM HE CAN'T SHARE?
SAKURADA...
どあああ
DOWNPOUR
?!
THE WEATHER REPORT... WAS DEAD ON.
ザワ
MURMUR
ザワ
MURMUR
OH NO. WHAT IF EVERYONE COMES BACK...?
...

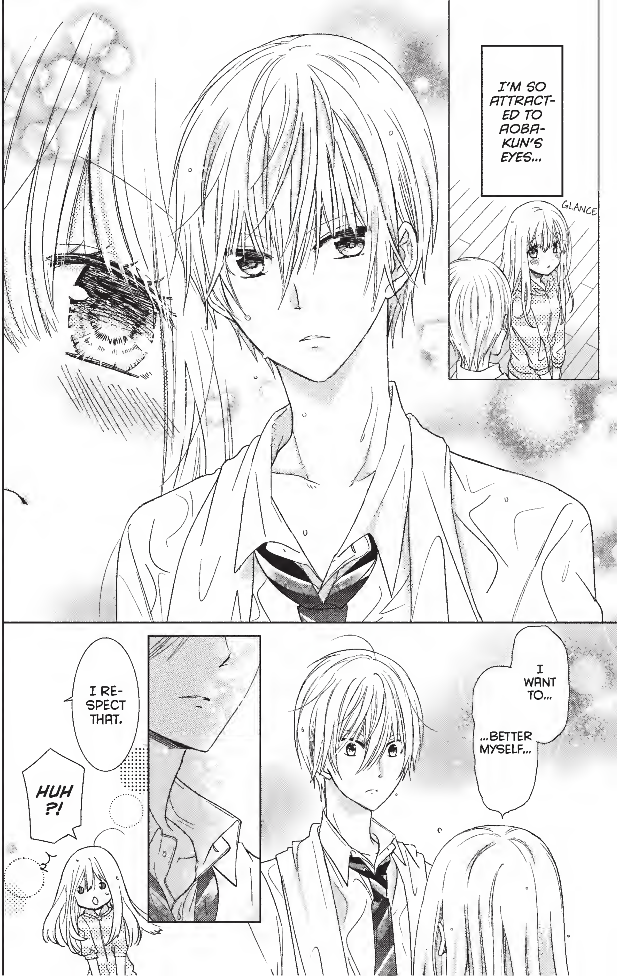

HEY !!
MY HOUSE ...
...ISN'T FAR FROM HERE...
ザァァァ...
FSSSHHH
MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME. MY MOM DOESN'T COME HOME FROM WORK 'TIL LATE.
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU...

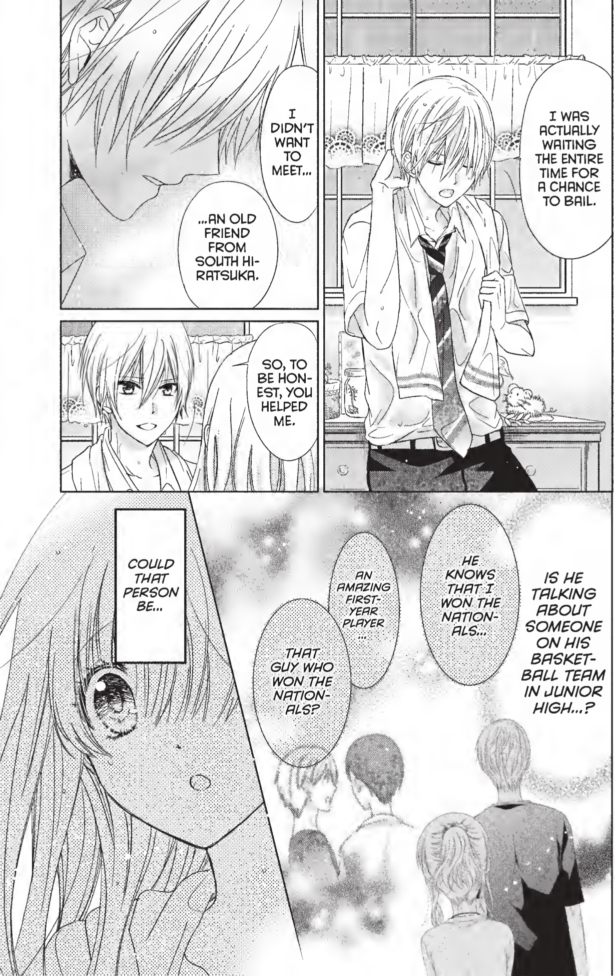

UH...
AHEM
HOW 'BOUT YOU CHANGE FIRST?
STICK...
はた...
UH, A TOWEL... ACK!
AND ALSO... OW!
ガッ
BANG
U...UM... JUST WAIT HERE...
I GOTTA CLEAN UP...
すすす...
SLIIINK
OH NO...!
IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT, I DID IT AGAIN...

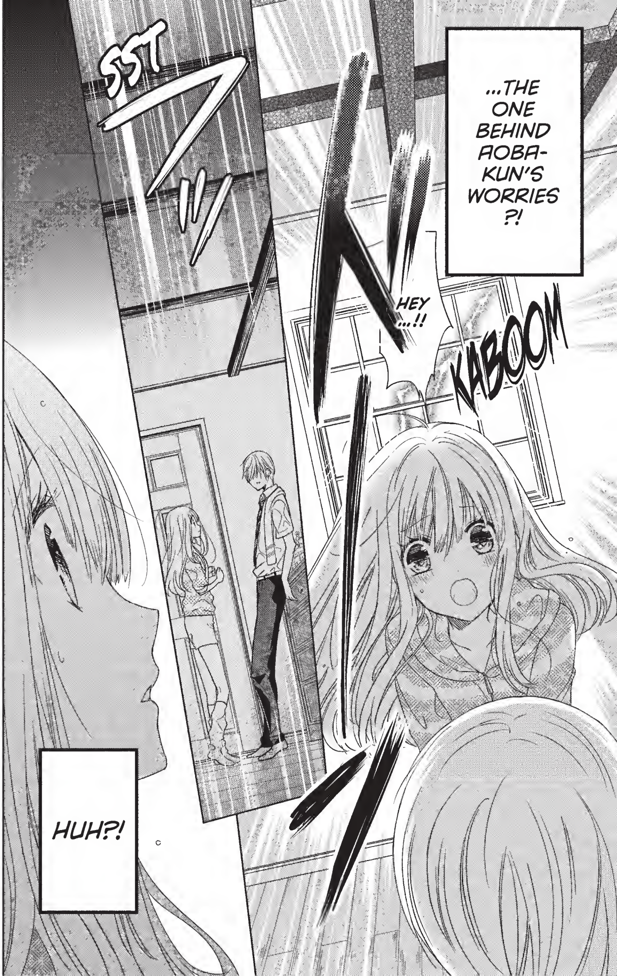

BUT...I CAN'T LEAVE HIM BE.
TH... THANKS FOR WAITING.
AFRAID...
?
OH, SORRY. I WAS LOOKING AT YOUR PHOTOS.

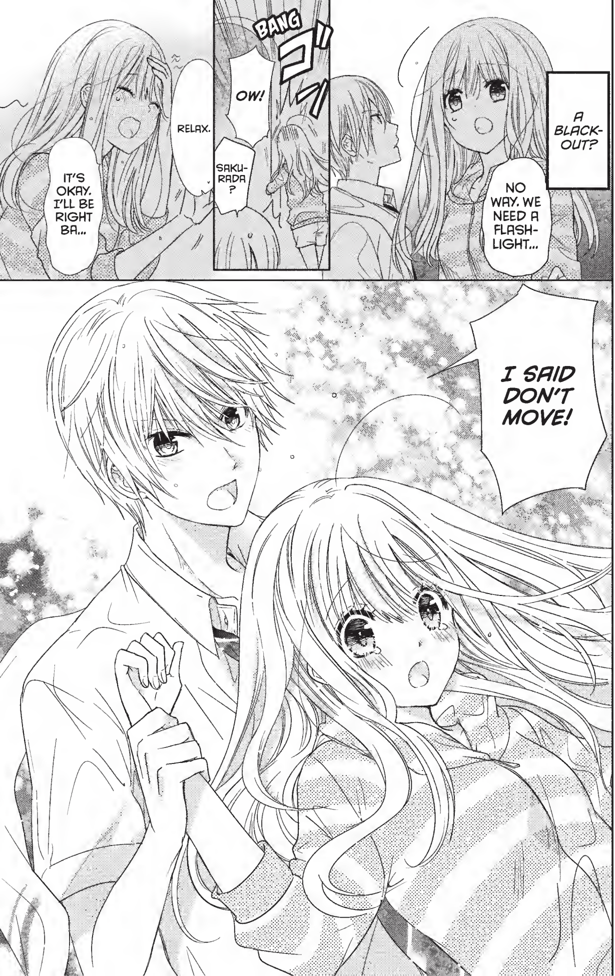

...
I GUESS HE WOULDN'T OPEN UP RIGHT AWAY.
IS THIS YOUR MOTHER?
YOU DON'T LOOK ALIKE
HEH HEH
あっ OH!
I ALMOST FORGOT! I HAVE TO MESSAGE MY MOM THAT I'M HOME!
?
UH, MY MOM CAN BE A BIT OVER-PROTECTIVE.
OHH...
WELL, SHE IS A SINGLE PARENT.
THAT'S TRUE, TOO, BUT SHE BOTTLES THINGS UP, TOO, SO...
H-HUH?
I WANT AOBA-KUN TO OPEN UP TO ME. WHAT...

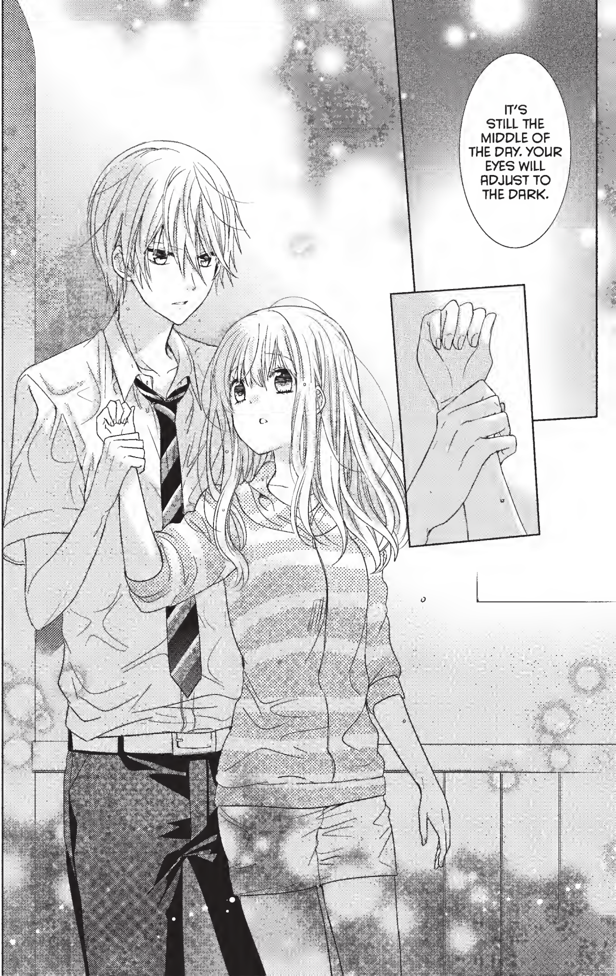

...AM I DOING?
...
AND?
UH...
WELL...
I STARTED WORKING AT THE LISTENING HOUSE TO BRING MONEY IN, BUT THE TRUTH IS...
...I ALSO WANTED TO BE A BETTER LISTENER TO MY MOTHER.
I SEE.
AND ALSO, I'M...SHY AROUND PEOPLE, SO...

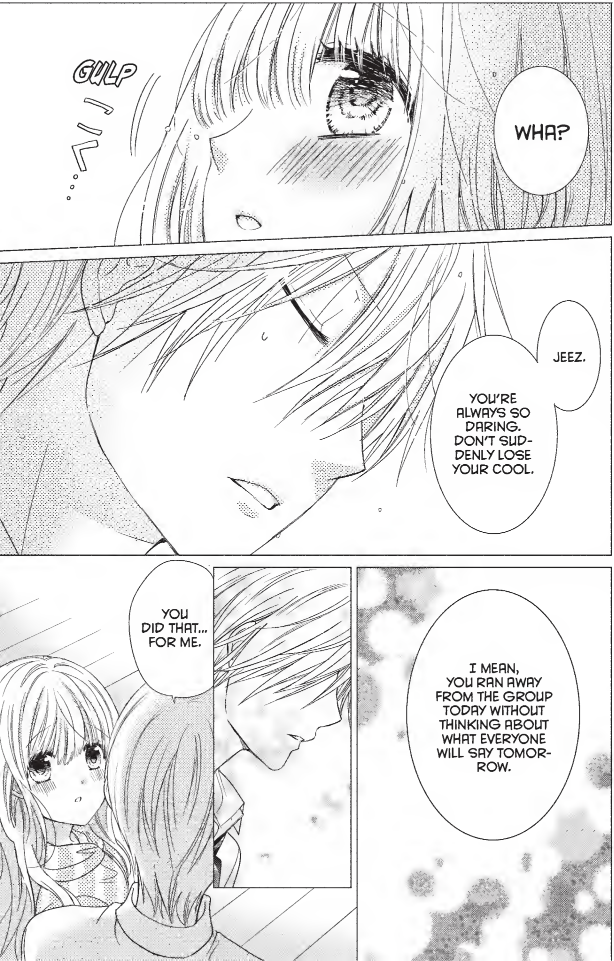

I'M SO ATTRACTED TO AOBA-KUN'S EYES...
GLANCE
I WANT TO...
...BETTER MYSELF...
I RESPECT THAT.
HUH?!

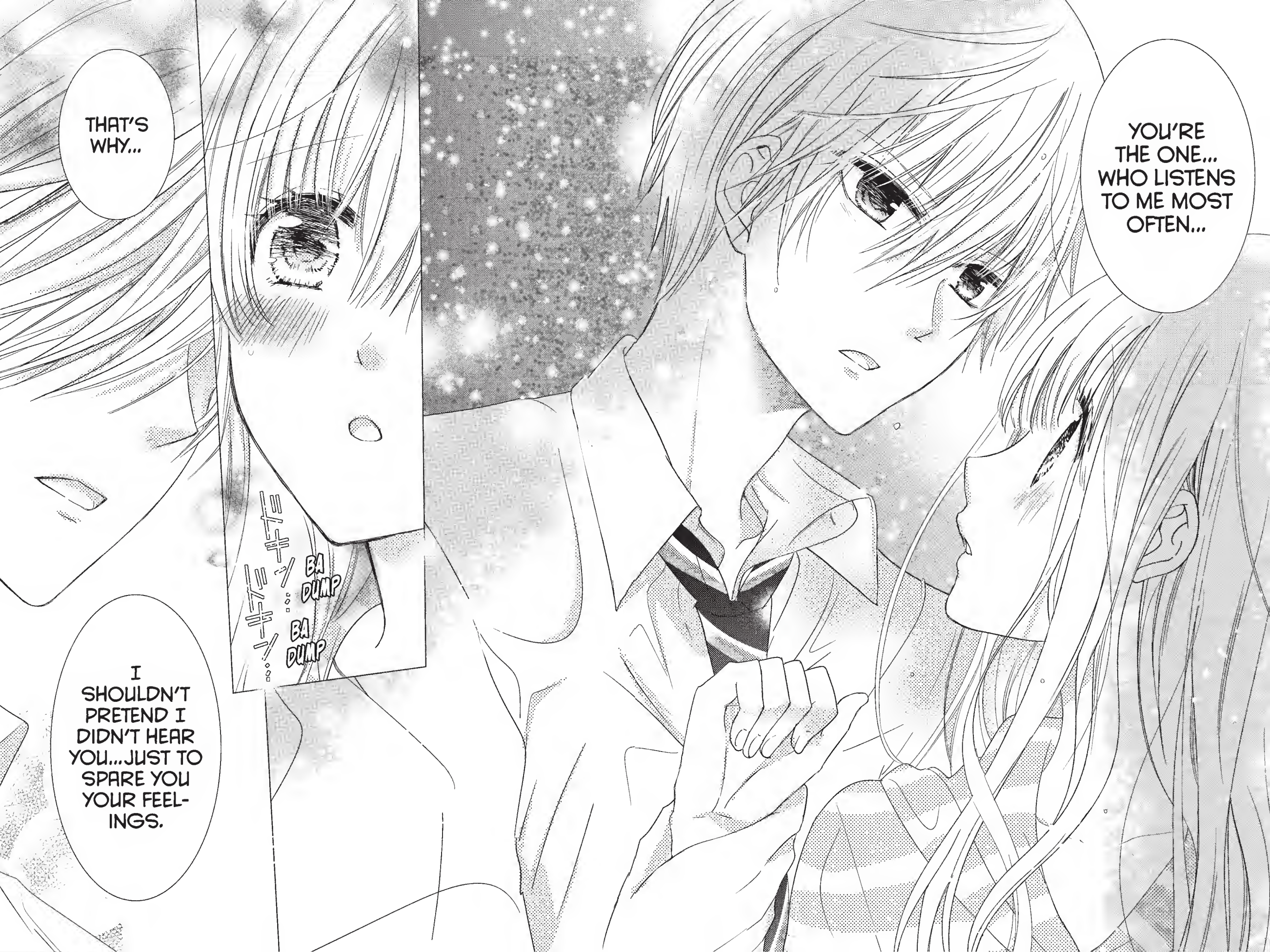

I WAS ACTUALLY WAITING THE ENTIRE TIME FOR A CHANCE TO BAIL.
I DIDN'T WANT TO MEET...
...AN OLD FRIEND FROM SOUTH HIRATSUKA.
SO, TO BE HONEST, YOU HELPED ME.
IS HE TALKING ABOUT SOMEONE ON HIS BASKETBALL TEAM IN JUNIOR HIGH...?
HE KNOWS THAT I WON THE NATIONALS...
AN AMAZING FIRST-YEAR PLAYER...
THAT GUY WHO WON THE NATIONALS?
COULD THAT PERSON BE...

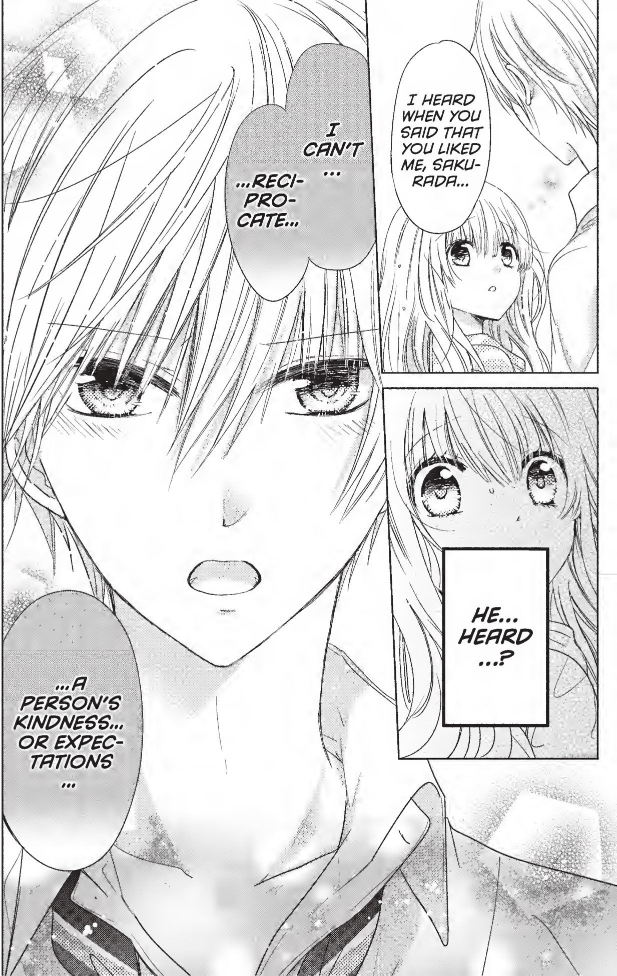

...THE ONE BEHIND AOBA-KUN'S WORRIES ?!
SST
KABOOM
HEY ...!!
HUH?!

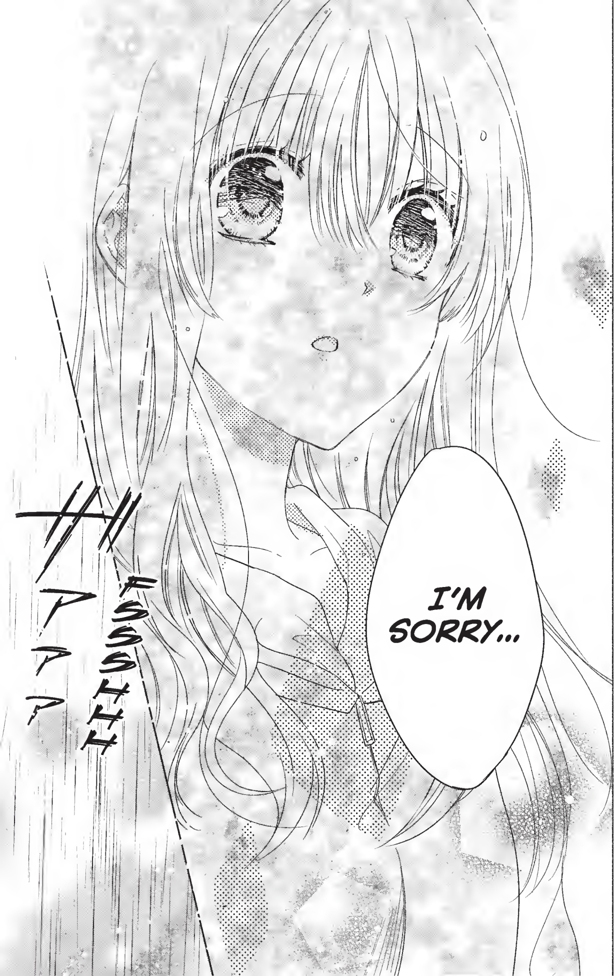

A BLACKOUT?
NO WAY. WE NEED A FLASHLIGHT...
BANG
OW!
SAKURADA?
RELAX.
IT'S OKAY. I'LL BE RIGHT BA...
I SAID DON'T MOVE!

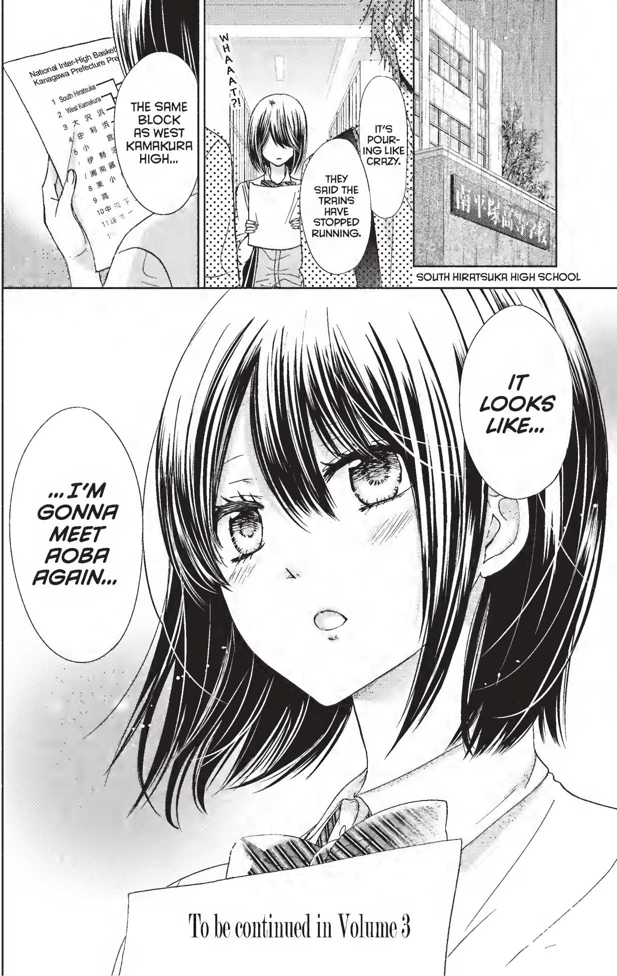

IT'S STILL THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY. YOUR EYES WILL ADJUST TO THE DARK.


WHA?
GULP
JEEZ.
YOU'RE ALWAYS SO DARING. DON'T SUDDENLY LOSE YOUR COOL.
I MEAN, YOU RAN AWAY FROM THE GROUP TODAY WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT WHAT EVERYONE WILL SAY TOMORROW.
YOU DID THAT... FOR ME.


YOU'RE THE ONE... WHO LISTENS TO ME MOST OFTEN...
THAT'S WHY...
ドキッ
BA DUMP
ドキッ
BA DUMP
I SHOULDN'T PRETEND I DIDN'T HEAR YOU...JUST TO SPARE YOU YOUR FEELINGS.


I HEARD WHEN YOU SAID THAT YOU LIKED ME, SAKURADA...
HE... HEARD ...?
I CAN'T ...
...RECIPROCATE...
...A PERSON'S KINDNESS... OR EXPECTATIONS ...


I'M SORRY...
FSSSHHH
HHPPPP


SOUTH HIRATSUKA HIGH SCHOOL
南平塚高等学校
IT'S POURING LIKE CRAZY.
THEY SAID THE TRAINS HAVE STOPPED RUNNING.
WHAAAAT?!
National Inter-High Basket
Kanagawa Prefecture Pre
1 South Hiratsuka
2 West Kamakura
3 大沢浜
THE SAME BLOCK AS WEST KAMAKURA HIGH...
IT LOOKS LIKE...
...I'M GONNA MEET AOBA AGAIN...

To be continued in Volume 3

AFTER-WORD

The utterly unbecoming Listening House uniform
Applying the tone... (I do it with the computer now)
STICK
STICK
STICK
STICK
GASP
I'VE APPLIED SO MUUUCH!!

HELLO! THIS IS TOYAMA. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR PICKING UP THE SECOND VOLUME!

IN THIS VOLUME, OTHER CHARACTERS BESIDES AOBA-KUN TOOK CENTER STAGE.

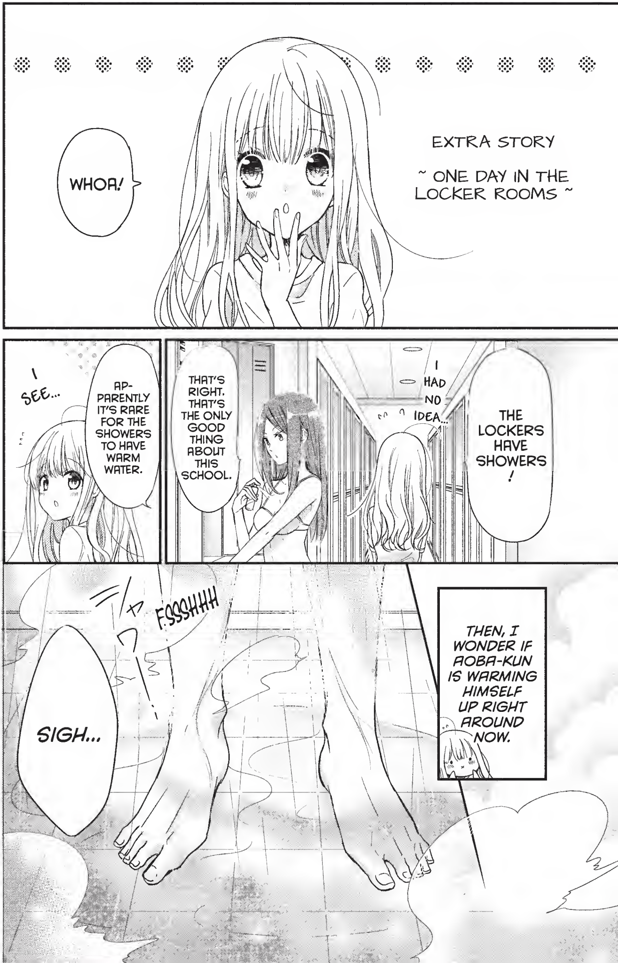
BY THE WAY, IN ORDER TO DRAW AOBA-KUN SO IT LOOKS LIKE THE SWEET ADOLESCENT MANGA THAT IT IS, I MADE IT A GOAL TO USE AS LITTLE SCREEN TONE (THE DOTTED PATTERNS) AS POSSIBLE.

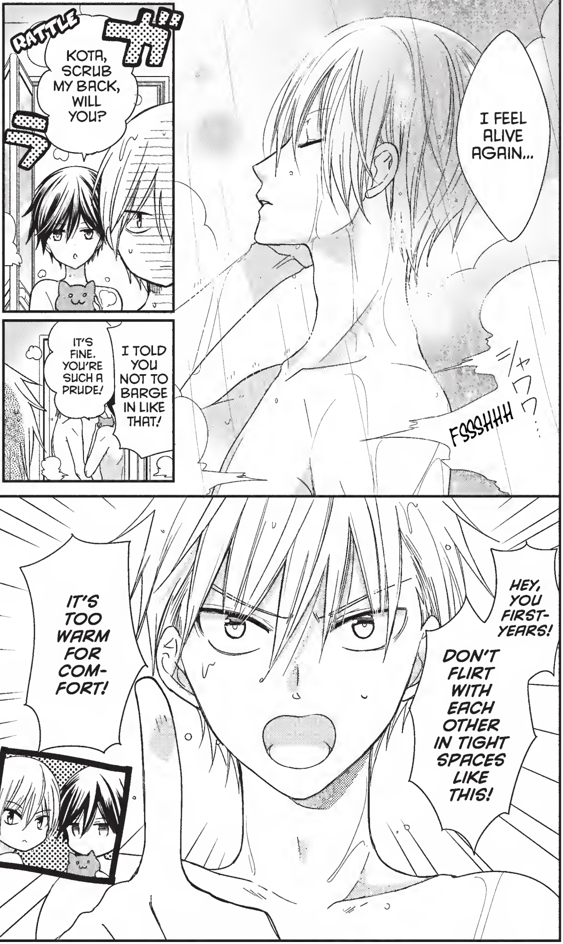
However...

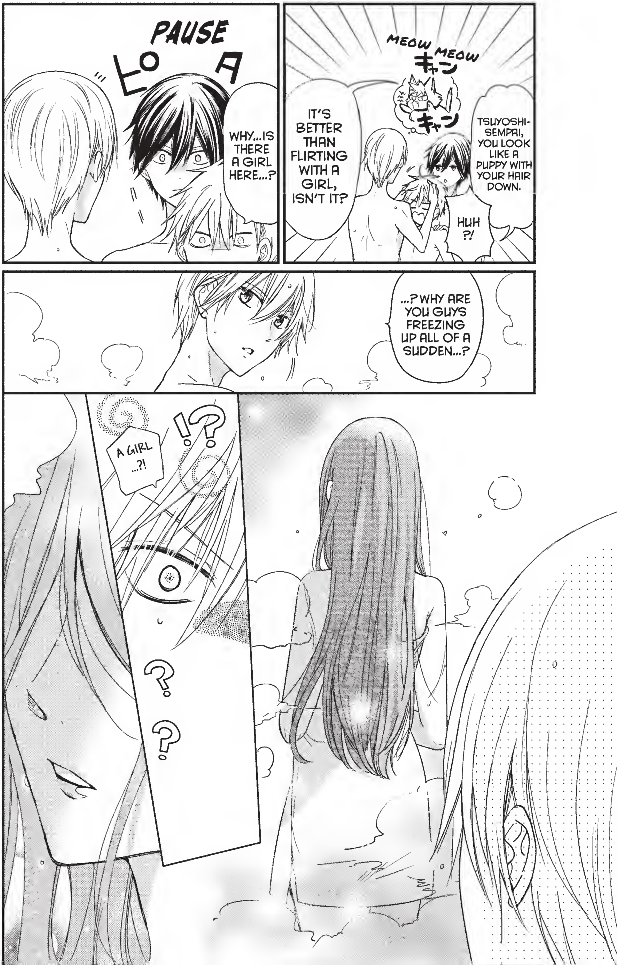
THAT HAPPENED QUITE OFTEN... SO I STILL HAVE A LOT TO LEARN. I'VE ALSO STARTED USING LIGHT COLORING!! ALTHOUGH THERE'S A LOT I HAVE TO IMPROVE ON WITH THIS, TOO... IT'S TRIAL-AND-ERROR EVERY TIME.

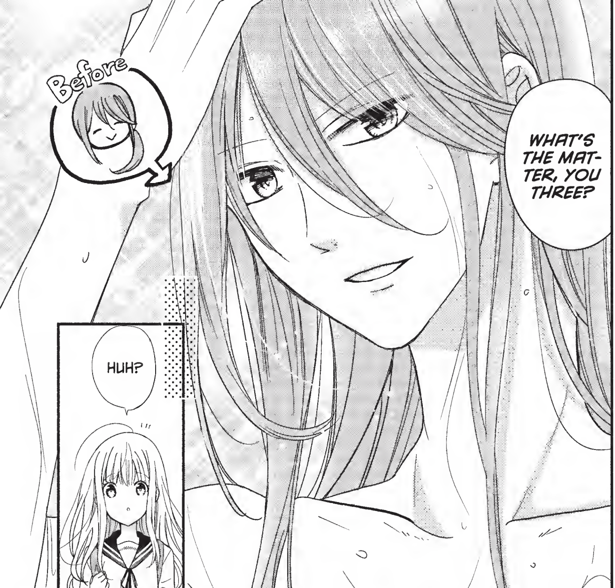
ANYWAY, WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN TO MAYO, WHO'S BEEN REJECTED BY AOBA?! AND WHO'S THE MYSTERY GIRL?! I HOPE WE'LL GET TO SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN IN THE THIRD VOLUME!

The extra story starts on the next page! ←


EXTRA STORY
~ ONE DAY IN THE LOCKER ROOMS ~
WHOA!
THE LOCKERS HAVE SHOWERS!
I HAD NO IDEA...
THAT'S RIGHT. THAT'S THE ONLY GOOD THING ABOUT THIS SCHOOL.
APPARENTLY IT'S RARE FOR THE SHOWERS TO HAVE WARM WATER.
I SEE...
FSSSHHH
THEN, I WONDER IF AOBA-KUN IS WARMING HIMSELF UP RIGHT AROUND NOW.
SIGH...


I FEEL ALIVE AGAIN...
シャワワ…
FSSSHHH
RATTLE
ガラッ
KOTA, SCRUB MY BACK, WILL YOU?
I TOLD YOU NOT TO BARGE IN LIKE THAT!
IT'S FINE. YOU'RE SUCH A PRUDE!
HEY, YOU FIRST-YEARS!
DON'T FLIRT WITH EACH OTHER IN TIGHT SPACES LIKE THIS!
IT'S TOO WARM FOR COMFORT!


MEOW MEOW
キャン
キャン
TSUYOSHI-SEMPAI, YOU LOOK LIKE A PUPPY WITH YOUR HAIR DOWN.
HUH ?!
IT'S BETTER THAN FLIRTING WITH A GIRL, ISN'T IT?
PAUSE
ピタ
WHY...IS THERE A GIRL HERE...?
...? WHY ARE YOU GUYS FREEZING UP ALL OF A SUDDEN...?
!?
A GIRL ...?!
?
?


Before
WHAT'S THE MATTER, YOU THREE?
HUH?
YOU ALL LOOK SO PALE... YOU GUYS DIDN'T TAKE A SHOWER?
WE DID. THE WATER WAS NICE AND WARM.
HE DEFINITELY DID THAT ON PURPOSE...
DEFINITELY...
I'M SO CONFUSED!!

★ THE END ★

Aoba-kun's Confessions 2

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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